APRIL 7, 1978. No. 81

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RAM

REAL WEIRD TALES FROM THE STRANGEST BAND IN THE LAND

DRAGON

GRAHAM PARKER
MADNESS ON THE PHONE TO OZ

JOHNNY O'KEEFE
THE FIRST AND FUTURE KING OF OZ ROCK

MEXICO
BY ABBIE HOFFMAN

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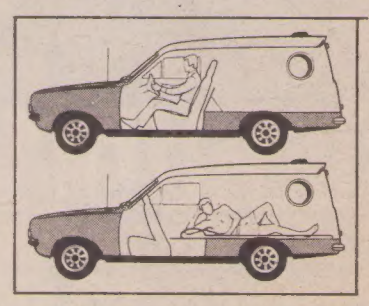

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Welcome to the Funhouse

REALITY, MYTHS AND LEGENDS OF THE NO-FUN BEACH BOYS

The Beach Boys Oz tour raised an interesting schism. Basically the media hated 'em. Overwhelmingly audiences loved 'em. Media people who came into contact with the Boys were appalled at the supercilious arrogance mixed with holier-than-thou platitudes with which the ageing surfers greeted all requests for teev, radio and press interviews.

Of course the standard of questioning from the Oz daily media is world-renowned for its blissful ignorance (e.g. reporter to Mike Love: "Have the Beach Boys being going very long?"), and bull-headed objectionableness (Paul Makin from **Willessee** *to Mike Love: "RAM magazine says the Beach Boys are tired and disinterested." We didn't).*

Even RAM has been known to pull the occasional boo-boo when quizing O/S stars. Still, the Beach Boys managed to set something of a standard for confusion when it came to the dealing with Oz media. Publicity was so uncoordinated, Patti Mostyn the Oz tour publicist with the Beach Boys found a Willessee camera team in the foyer of the Melbourne Hilton rarin' to hoe into an interview that had been set up from another publicity office in Sydney. Turned out there was no way the Beach Boys would Do It Again for Willessee.

And that was only one hassle. A reporter from the ABC was threatened with physical violence if she mentioned anything about Charles Manson while interviewing Beach Boy Dennis Wilson.

When they did answer questions the Beach Boys, Mike Love in particular, giggled a lot, and told white lies about their history and record sales. The attitude was just about summed up by Love when he shrugged and smiled, "Why do we play all our old hits? We'll play 'em anything they want. We know we can still write good new music but if they wanna hear the old stuff, it's pointless to resist it."

Yeah, the Beach Boys as **Living Legends** *were an aloof, distinctly unfriendly lot.*

But then, there was enough reason for them to be so. For the **reality** *of the Beach Boys is quite twisted and tortuous.*

Observe: Mike Love on stage announcing, "Now we're gonna introduce you to the man who's responsible for writing 99.5% of the Beach Boys hits–BRIAN WILSON""

The audience goes bananas, does a standing ovation.

Mike Love: "Brian's been feeling a bit sickly lately–he's got a bad throat but, trouper that is, he'll sing **Cottonfields** *tonight."*

The band strikes up and Brian, who has been sitting on a box brushing back his hair with irritable, nervous strokes and playing two and three note bass runs, lurches to the microphone, sings three words, his voice cracks and **zaaaaaaaap!** *Carl Wilson, his brother, takes over. Brian brushes his hair back, looks futilely angry and sits on his box again.*

The little incident points out Brian Wilson is still very much a back seat passenger as a Beach Boy performer. Yet, what Love says is true. He wrote and produced virtually **all** *the Beach Boys' hits. Then came his breakdown from a vicious circle of strain and drugs in the mid-sixties, and his return as a public Beach Boy since 1975 has largely been a matter of public therapy.*

The reality is the rest of the Beach Boys often have to cluster around Brian before a concert, showering him with compliments like "But Brian, NME said you played real great, they still respect you as a musician, man."

*It'd be all quite heartwarming if the NME review wasn't nearly three years old, and the attitude wasn't so smarmily, 'let's-get-this-guy-on-stage-***now,** *we're late'.*

The reality is the Beach Boys are a divided camp with Mike Love and Al Jardine shaping up against the Wilson family at business meetings. The reality is the Beach Boys are such a divided group the reason there are **four** *keyboard players on stage is 'cos various members wanted* **their** *man to play, and when no settlement was reached, all were included.*

The reality is the Beach Boys come on stage as a **seventeen** *piece group and the harmonies are ragged, Brian Wilson is mostly missing, the five-piece horn section are used* **instead** *of vocal harmonies in some songs, and nobody keeps time very well at all.*

But **The Myth** *of the Beach Boys is something very different again. The crowd I was with (the second concert at Melbourne's Myer Music Bowl) were the real stars of the show. They stomped and cheered and raged from the opening formless crescendo which resolved into* **California Girls,** *through all the big hits–***Little Deuce Coupe, Be True To Your School, God Only Knows, Sloop John B, Wild Honey, Surfin' USA, Good Vibrations** *(turned into a singalong for chrissake!)* **In My Room, Surfer Girl, Heroes and Villains, Help Me Rhonda, Wouldn't It Be Nice** *and of course,* **Ba-ba-ba-Barbara-Ann** *and* **Fun Fun Fun.** *Somewhere towards the middle Mike Love and Al Jardine sang some of* **their** *new songs and* **zap!** *Brian and Dennis Wilson were off stage. Ahha!* **They knew!**

But 90% of the show **was** *genuine rock history and the little girls were bopping with the Toorak trendies, were bopping with Brunswick bikies. Who cares the show was actually sloppily delivered, with the wild response taken as a matter of course by the band? Who cares that, in reality, the Beach Boys* **can't** *deliver their greatest hits with the same enthusiasm and skill they recorded 'em with.*

Well I do for one. If I want to get off on crowd response I'll go to revivalist church meetings.

Or maybe I just went to one.

But that's just my opinion. Let's look at this on a wider scale of judgement. The Beach Boys main problem was the fantastic gap between **reality, legend** *and* **myth.**

The crowd were right into **the myth** *of the Boys as fun, fun, fun, eternal summer and a genuine slice of rock history as well.* **The legend** *of the Beach Boys is that these guys who created surf music in the early sixties are still one of the most popular concert and recording acts in the late '70's.* **The reality** *is the Beach Boys are as assembly of senior rock musicians who can't present a co-ordinated act.*

Traditionally, the difference between myth, legend and reality is: reality is what is, legend is romanticised reality and myth is fantasy based on legend.

This time round the Australian audiences were keepers of the Beach Boys myth, but the Boys themselves were most reluctant to have people pry into their legend simply because they knew the reality.

And as the distance between the gaps increases, the one thing that gets lost is the music.

So far this summer we've seen ELO use tapes throughout their show and now Beach Boys, who **should** *have used tapes, they sure couldn't get close to what they got on record nearly ten years ago.*

It doesn't seem to be a popular theory these days, but some of us actually go to concerts to listen to music and feel quite let down when the speaker boxes overfloweth with aural mud.

Anthony O'Grady

POSTSCRIPT: *While playing in Perth a few days after the Melbourne concert, Carl Wilson appeared incapable on stage. After staggering a few times he collapsed into Dennis Wilson's drumkit and had to be led off. Some of the audience, feeling the guitarist was drunk, demanded their money back. Publicist, Patti Mostyn in a radio interview to Sydney and Melbourne stressed Carl had had food poisoning and had appeared against doctor's orders. The Perth concert came after bad Adelaide reviews and an astonishingly savage attack from Ian Meldrum on Countdown where he claimed "hundreds" of people had rung him to say the Beach Boys had been "disgraceful" on stage.*

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DIRT

LITTLE RIVER BAND FOR LIVE TEEV SPECIAL

Coca Cola bottlers are believed to have paid a massive amount for advertising rights to a Little River Band teev special at the Rainbow Theatre in London in late '77.

The live gig itself received reviews ranging from good to sparkling, and the show is rated as one of the best the band has done.

After recording the Rainbow show, the band flew to Australia to guest star in the massive Rockarena promotion.

The teev special (to be shown on the 9 Network) is regarded as a major breakthrough for the band—it's believed to be the first time a concert special on an Australian band has been accepted for prime-time commercial television.

Little River are shown performing much of the *Diamantina Cocktail* **album including** *Help Is Is On Its Way, Home On Monday* **and** *Happy Anniversary.* **Off-stage segments of the band talking about their performances and life on the road have been slotted between performance clips.**

Dates & times: Melbourne: March 29, 7.30-8.30; Sydney: March 25, 6.30-7.30; Adelaide: March 28, 7.30-8.30; Brisbane: March 23, 7.30-8.30.

KEVIN BORICH–NEW BASS PLAYER AND A U.S. DEAL

Bass player **Bob Jackson** has left the **Kevin Borich Express.** He's replaced by **Paul Christie** formerly with Sydney disco/funk group *Loose Booty.* Jackson left because of "pressures of touring" and is now back in his native New Zealand. Reaction within the Borich camp describes Christie as, "the best player we've had since Tim Partridge." **Michael Chugg,** manager of KBE, has also released the news that Borich will play his last Australian date for '78 on June 1. The band then flies to New Zealand for a few gigs, then arrives in the US on June 8. They'll play showcase dates in Los Angeles and other major centres up and down the West Coast. In mid-September they'll move back to LA to prepare for U.S. recording sessions. An American producer, as yet unnamed, will be used and it's mooted this time Borich will use other people's songs as well as his own. "I'm naturally expecting Kevin to do very well in America," says **Chugg.** "Australian bands get so much stage experience both in large and small venues, they can handle *anything* in the U.S.

"To be honest, we haven't finalised a record deal for Kevin in America yet. But I think it'll happen the same way as it did in Australia. Once they hear him play and see the reaction he *always* gets, people will want to release and buy his albums."

Chugg who also manages **Richard Clapton** and **Stars** also promised an announcement "very soon" about an American deal for Richard Clapton. "We have to meet with the Australian record company and tell *them* first," he said.

The Angels, have dedicated their new single *Coming Down* to Queensland premier **Bjelke Petersen.** Something about a Big Brother complex.

Split Enz are picking up good press on their European tour. Music Week described a sold out gig at London's Roundhouse as an "ecstatic event."

THE CHAMPION LIVES

After the brawl we reported in the last issue of RAM (No. 80), the Champion Pub in Melbourne is open for business as usual. We reported the entire hotel had closed, not quite true as it turned out. The upstairs music room was put out of action and at the time of writing it seems that room still does not feature bands.

Stones guitarist **Ron Wood** has signed a solo recording contract with CBS. But he won't be recording his debut album on the label until later in the year – after the Stones touring commitments have been fulfilled.

Mike Love of the Beach Boys shows lotsa spry youthfulness and energy while explaining the Beach Boys are still Fun Fun Fun. See above. (pic Richard Bailey).

LED ZEP GUILTY

Led Zep drummer **John Bonham** has been put on probation following the well-publicised back stage fight in America last year. Bonham was arrested last July after three of promoter Bill Graham's employees were injured in the brawl. Bonham and the two Led Zep roadies involved were fined $500 each.

Now it's an all-star cast rock opera set in 3077 AD. Performing under the monniker of the **Intergalactic Touring Band** are such as **Rod Argent, Meatloaf, Frank Rossi** and **Rick Parfitt (Status Quo)** and **Ben E King.** Of course the **London Philharmonic Orchestra** is used. Of course it's all absurd. It comes to you from **Danny Beckerman** and **Wil Malone** who've already asked you *to pay* for the *Tommy* (LPO version) and *World War II* albums.

NSW BANS VOLUME

NSW clubs are introducing traffic lights for bands. It's actually a sound meter with flashing green, yellow and red lights. If the volume rises above 95 dbs, this infernal machine cuts the stage power and the band's lights and amps switch off. **Skyhooks** ran into one at the Castle Hill RSL club but after mucho hassling from manager **Michael Gudinski** the meter was disconnected. Support band **Dave Warner From The Suburbs** wasn't so lucky. His power was cut several times.

What's this we hear about **Russell Morris** returning to Oz (after a soujourn in Los Angeles) *with a hair transplant.*
On the other hand, former **Zoot** star **Daryl Cotton** *has* returned from the US and is currently sorting through songs for a recording session. He's staying with **LRB's Beeb Birtles,** also a refugee from Zoot.

Sound Unlimited compere **Donnie Sutherland** was in court on three drink driving charges. He's charged with refusing to submit to two breath tests and driving whilst under the influence.

The **Skyhooks** 12" maxi-single sold out in Melbourne and Adelaide after just three days in the stores.

Brian de Courcey probably wishes he managed Rocky Mattioli instead . . . two of his clients **Ian Meldrum** (Mr. Countdown) and **Gary McDonald** (Norman Gunston) were floored ignominously a few weekends ago. First **Ian Meldrum** had an argument with **Boz Scaggs'** Australian Publicity People about the possibility of Boz compering **Countdown. Boz** saw the show and said *'Hell* **NO!'** Meldrum persisted and became so unpopular with the Scaggs menage, Scaggs himself threw him out of a Melbourne reception. As for **Gary,** he was struck down by a television executive at the Logies presentation. Why? 'Cos Gary was gabbling, so they say.

Peter Allen has been named *Entertainer Of The Year* by the influential American show biz mag *After Dark.* They described him as "the most original concert and recording artist on the entertainment scene today." Now his former wife **Lisa Minnelli** has asked him to rewrite her repertoire.

Mike Love of the **Beach Boys** says the whole group dislike **Warner Bros Record Co** so intensely, they want a sardonic tail-off on their final album for the company with an Elmer Fudd voice-alike saying *"Th . . . th . . . that's all folks, th . . . th . . . thank God."*

YES WE HAVE NO GUITARS

Steve Howe from Yes has waited a year for the Gibson factory in Michigan to build him a new guitar. Finally it arrived in London and Howe sent a roadie out to collect it. But somewhere between the unloading and collection, da guitar disappeared. Steve was so upset he couldn't even touch his brown rice that night. No, actually it's a bummer and we sympathise.

Little River Band are now almost platinum (1,000,000 albums sold) in the U.S. with *Diamantina Cocktail* as the new single *Happy Anniversary* moves up the charts faster than *Help is On Its Way.* In Oz, *Cocktail* has reached about 160,000 making it the third biggest-selling Oz album ever. Flipside of Little River Banders Graham Goble and Beeb Birtles duo single *Lonely Lives,* is *Megan,* dedicated to Megan Tudor, Beeb's steady. 3XY's John O'Donnell rang the lass to ask her feelings on the tender song. "Do I get the royalties if it's about me?" she asked. That's love, folks . . .

Phil Lynott and **Brian Downey** of **Thin Lizzy** are in the studio helping former side-kick **Gary Moore** with a solo album.

The crew at Festival are getting a bit fidgety these days. **Margret Roadknight** recorded an album before she went to America and wasn't happy with the mix. So she had it done again. Still wasn't good enough, so a release date was set back in order to re-mix it. Returning from the U.S. she heard the second re-mix. No good. Now, the third re-mix is under way and the release date's been set back – again.

Wizard Records in Sydney who distribute 'em in Oz, claim the **Sex Pistols** got back together on Feb. 18. Great news for rabid followers of Rotten, but howcum none of the overseas rock papers or news services have carried the story?

Dragon's *April Sun In Cuba* has gone gold after selling 50,000 copies. Meanwhile the *Sunshine* album has been released in America under the title of *Dragon.*

John and Yoko have bought some dairy cows to graze on their 140 acre farm in Delaware County, New York. Says daddy, it'll give three year old son **Sean** "a chance to keep in touch with mother nature."

And from **The Residents** in San Francisco comes news that **Cris Cutler,** formerly with English avant-rockers **Henry Cow** is gonna be on the upcoming Residents' elpee. The record, set for September release, is based on a concept surrounding primitive Eskimo culture. Many say this LP will challenge the very definition of music.
Challange it? It's starting to take it over! Last month's **UK New Wave Charts** showed the Residents with three elpees in the Top Ten.

THE RODNEY GOSSIP COLUMN

Rod's former lady **Dee Harrington** (the one before **Britt** who was before **Bebe** who was . .) has been spreading *all sorts* of vicious rumours about our star.

Dee says **Rod** used to try and make her star in his home porn movies.

She also reports that he indulged in gross amounts of cocaine and alcohol, refused to leave the house on the grounds that he had nothing to wear, and locked himself in the bedroom to avoid visitors.

Rod also locked his *pet parrot* in a safe whenever it got on his nerves.

Then there was the time he chucked a pint of beer over young **Dee** 'cos she danced with **Ryan O'Neil** (the actor).

Then, adding insult to perjury (sorry, injury) **Rod** accused her of being unfaithful when he found a scratch on her back. *She says* it was caused by sleeping in jewellery.

Then, to top it all off after the final bust-up, *his* dad told *her* dad when she went around to retrieve her gear, that she couldn't get in without an appointment 'cos **Britt Ekland** had already moved in.

Gee Virginia, you still wanna meet him?

Abba's looooovely ladies **Frida** and **Agnetha** have been offered parts in a sex movie. But the clearasil clean pair turned down the offer 'cos they "weren't the right parts." Gee, and we thought the Swedes were into sex.

JAGGER COSMETICS

Ever wondered how **Mick Jagger** keeps himself looking so youthful? Waddya mean ya never noticed!

Apparently the thirty five year old Rolling Stone uses Elizabeth Arden beauty products. (Hey Bazz, charge 'em for this ad.) And, just so your fave super stud will *smell* nice too, he dabs perfume from Tangiers over his face, his wrists *and* his bottom. Sweet huh.

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NEW FROM THE NEW WAVE

The Saints (a.k.a. Bailey Wilson Dig Bland) are currently on their third British tour. This time, it's with a brass section that appears on their new album *Eternally Yours*. After the tour, The Saints will return home to Oz before heading for America.

Ex Pistol *Johnny Rotten* is back in London after a holiday in the sun. Jamaica to be exact.

Meanwhile, *Sid Vicious* and *Steve Jones* have recorded a song in Rio with Great Train Gobber *Ronnie Biggs* on lead vocals. Whether it's for commercial release, isn't certain yet.

British poonks *The Damned* have finally broken up. The split came when guitarist Brian James decided to form his own band in the hope of highlighting his orginal material. The Damned, who came to the fore-front of the punk movement in late '76, released two albums *Damned Damned Damned* and *Music For Pleasure*. They were the first British punk outfit to tour America.

Sandy Pearlman is set to produce the second album by the *Clash*. Previously, Pearlman's been associated with the *Blue Oyster Cult, The Dictators* and *Pavlovs Dog*. The Clash want a sound that's acceptable in the States. So what happened to *I'm So Bored By The U.S.A.* boys?

After the notorious Filth played in a Sydney pub last weekend, their guitarist Bob Short was thrown out for being underage. He's seventeen. Problem is, young Bob doesn't even drink. Filth do looooovely numbers like *Do The Cyclone Tracey, Don McKay Is Wearing Kustom Konkrete Shoes, Ballad Of George Reeves, Thalidomide Child* and *Do The Harold Holt*.

Finch's road crew are carrying a first aid kit in the cabin of their truck now. And it ain't 'cos they're worried about their own driving ability. Over the past few weeks they've done their Florence Nightingale act when confronted with serious road accidents (one involving a truck and a bus). So now they're prepared.

Paul Michael Glaser (a.k.a. Starsky) is preparing to record his solo album after hearing that sidekick cop **David Soul** made a million bucks last year.

Gruntin' Gregg Allman is thinking about reforming the **Allman Bros.** Seems that he's been ordered to pay $10,000 in alimony to his first two wives so he needs some bread to keep out of jail. (Again?)

Melb. lad **Thorburn** getting great reviews in England for his idiosyncratic, maniac single *Brick Wall*. It's the tender story of a man who wakes up to find his wife is having a brick wall built around his side of the bed. Good maniac voice and great bottleneck guitar. Get one if yer can find it.

PATTI SMITH EASTER EGG

Patti Smith is rumoured to be planning a tour of Oz to follow-up the release of her noo un *Easter*.

Her third album, it's called *Easter* 'cos the New York poet regards it as her resurrection lp. Very little has been heard of Patti since she fell off stage and injured her neck during a gig last year.

Eric Burdon is planning a come-back tour in the U.K. following the release of his noo lp *Survivor*.

Former **Curved Air** vocalist **Sonja Kristina** has scored a new recording contract and is now recording a solo album.

SUPERSTARS BREAK DOWN

Jeeze, dese rock stars'll use any excuse to delay their albums. First **Rory Gallagher** fractures his thumb in Los Angeles. Then **Pete Townshend** proves he **can't** see for miles and miles by walking through a plate glass door. "Gee, I f'ought it woz open." Consequently, you'll have to wait for another few weeks/months/years for the noo Who elpee.

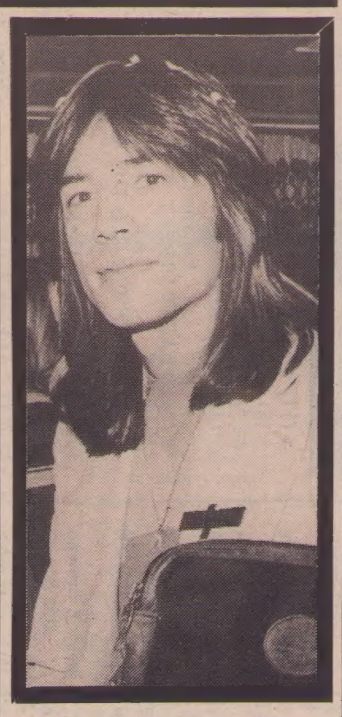
Although the Oz-bred section of **AC/DC** arrived home on Xmas Eve, their English bassist **Cliff Williams** had trouble obtaining a work visa. Finally he was allowed in to do his stuff on the Seedies new album.

Bob Marley has returned to Jamaica for the first time since an attempt was made on his life in '76. On his return from the self-imposed exile, the reggae artist was greeted by thousands of fans at the airport.

Alvin Lee's Ten Years Later make their first appearance on vinyl in April when their debut album *Rocket Fuel* is due for release. Lee was originally the guitarist with Ten Years After.

Bad Co. are still working on an album due for release within the next month or so. Well, that's what *they* say anyway. It seems they've been doing very little apart from a bit of jet-setting here and there.

Mick Taylor, former Stones guitarist, has almost completed his first solo album. He's been working on the lp for six months and plans to follow it up with a tour.



GOCK SPLITS HUSH

Guitarist Les Gock has confirmed he will no longer appear with Hush. "If you're going to be in a band" he said, "you have to devote time to it. And if you're going to devote time to it, you have to think whether it's worth it. Actually, I really handed in the towel over nine months ago, just before the last album came out. I wanted the band to fold then, with dignity; not slowly crumble to pieces as it has done over the past year."

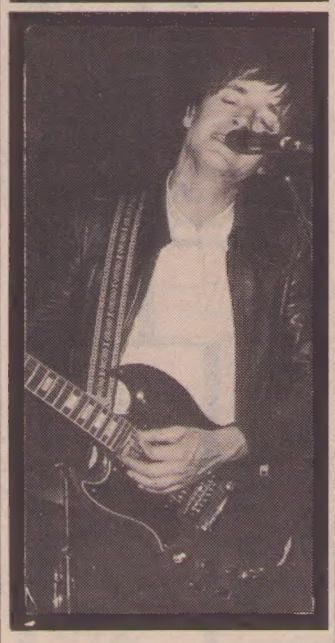
Gock's public disavowment comes nearly two months after drummer Chris Pailthorpe's announcement he was leaving.

The two remaining members, singer Keith Lamb and bass player Jacques De Jongh are working with other players under the moniker *Keith Lamb and The New Hush*.

Former **Deep Purple** vocalist **Dave Coverdale** hits the road again next month for a British tour with his new band.

So you thought punks were disgusting.

Nightmoves came up with a rare **Doors** film clip of *The Unknown Soldier* a few episodes ago. It featured psychedelic colours, old war film clips and **Jim Morrison** in bondage. Best part for violence inclined punks was when **Jimbo** gets shot, his head lolls and this thick red viscous stuff cascades from his gaping mouth all over. *(GAAAAAAAAAAAAAAG – ed).*



Melb. band **Parachute** now recording first single under direction of **Ross Wilson.** Song most likely to be released is happy singalong choon *Let's Get Rich Together* . . . . . **Kevin Borich Express** now have albums released in Europe on *Marilla* label . . . . . two punk nights in Melbourne at Bananas and Tiger Room said to be drawing ever-increasing crowds.

An American woman who decided to end it all by slashing her wrists, is suing the fireman who stopped her from bleeding to death.

The fireman hit her in the mouth to quieten her down and knocked out two teeth.

Now, the would-be suicide is seeking $44,000 for her injuries.

Queen are now managing themselves after breaking away from **John Reid** (who also manages **Elton John.**) **Kiki Dee** has also left the Reid stable.

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am I free
lock my door
I watch TV
— news
— police woman
— the streets of San Francisco
— Baretta
— chooper one
— cop shop
— the Sweeney
— the F.B.I.
violence Mr. Presidents
you keep us aggressive to kill
equal your predecessors
you let ill barbarism already
suggest a sciencefiction but
future star war
for chirst sake see
who wants space to be
a battlefield of our future past
or more
a paradise
Mr. Presidents, your jobs
have not much time anymore
computers can serve us better
and prevent war
you then may yet hold the key
symbolic but like any sort of
leader before, until now
you failed to unlock my door
and let me live my door
and let me live in peace
for evermore
but who wants
peace anyway
as I said
I watch you
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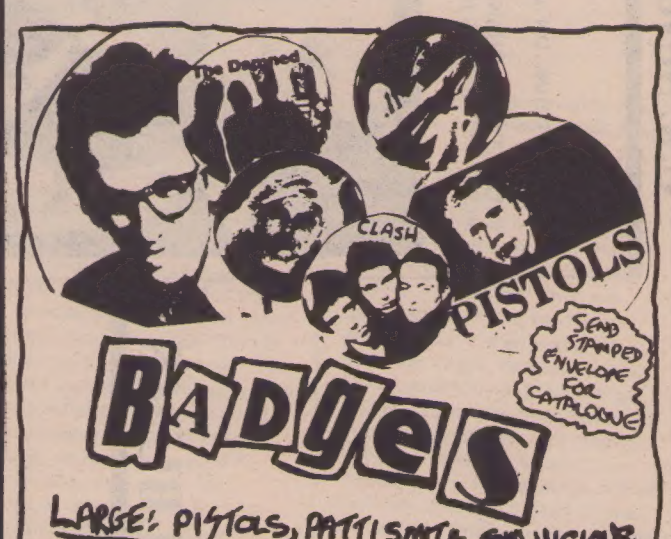

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OZ SINGLES

This Last Week		
1 (1)	IT'S A HEARTACHE	Bonnie Tyler
2 (4)	EMOTION	Samantha Sang
3 (3)	SURFIN' USA	Leif Garrett
4 (2)	MULL OF KINTYRE/GIRLS SCHOOL	Wings
5 (9)	ISN'T IT TIME	The Babys
6 (5)	HOW DEEP IS YOUR LOVE	Bee Gees
7 (7)	NEEDLES AND PINS	Smokie
8 (6)	BLUE BAYOU	Linda Ronstadt
9 (8)	NOBODY DOES IT BETTER	Carly Simon
10 (10)	HERE YOU COME AGAIN	Dolly Parton
11 (–)	•STAYIN' ALIVE	Bee Gees
12 (13)	TAKE A CHANCE ON ME	Abba
13 (12)	2.4.6.8 MOTORWAY	Tom Robinson Band
14 (14)	SHORT PEOPLE	Randy Newman
15 (18)	YES SIR I CAN BOOGIE	Baccara
16 (15)	BABY COME BACK	Player
17 (21)	SOMETIMES WHEN WE TOUCH	Dan Hill
18 (11)	DON'T LET ME BE MISUNDERSTOOD	Santa Esmeralda & Leroy Gomez
19 (–)	•IF I HAD WORDS	Scott Fitzgerald & Yvonne Keeley
20 (28)	•(LOVE IS) THICKER THAN WATER	Andy Gibb
21 (–)	•RUNAROUND SUE	Leif Garrett
22 (16)	YOU LIGHT UP MY LIFE	Debby Boone
23 (17)	BLACK BETTY	Ram Jam
24 (–)	•CALLING OCCUPANTS OF INTERPLANETARY CRAFT	Carpenters
25 (19)	DON'T IT MAKE MY BROWN EYES BLUE	Crystal Gayle
26 (23)	THE CRUNCH	The Rah Band
27 (–)	FEELS LIKE IT'S SLIPPIN' AWAY	Sherbet
28 (20)	UPTOWN FESTIVAL	Shalamar
29 (29)	HEY DEANIE	Shaun Cassidy
30 (26)	FROM NEW YORK TO L.A.	Patsy Gallant

OZ ALBUMS

This Last Week		
1 (1)	SIMPLE DREAMS	Linda Ronstadt
2 (2)	RUMOURS	Fleetwood Mac
3 (6)	LEIF GARRETT	Leif Garrett
4 (3)	OUT OF THE BLUE	Electric Light Orchestra
5 (5)	DOWN TWO THEN LEFT	Boz Scaggs
6 (4)	ABBA–THE ALBUM	Abba
7 (7)	FOOT LOOSE & FANCY FREE	Rod Stewart
8 (12)	SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER	Original Movie Soundtrack
9 (8)	RUNNING ON EMPTY	Jackson Browne
10 (9)	SILK DEGREES	Boz Scaggs
11 (10)	A NEW WORLD RECORD	Electric Light Orchestra
12 (11)	I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE WITH ME TONIGHT	Neil Diamond
13 (13)	LIVE AND LET LIVE	10cc
14 (19)	•MARCIA HINES LIVE ACROSS AUSTRALIA	Marcia Hines
15 (15)	DON'T LET ME BE MISUNDERSTOOD	Santa Esmeralda
16 (16)	WEEKEND IN L.A.	George Benson
17 (21)	THE STRANGER	Billy Joel
18 (18)	PARADISE	Stars
19 (17)	MOONFLOWER	Santana
20 (14)	HEROES	David Bowie
21 (20)	OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN'S GREATEST HITS VOLUME 2	
22 (22)	LINDA RONSTADT'S GREATEST HITS	Linda Ronstadt
23 (29)	•BAT OUT OF HELL	Meatloaf
24 (–)	•BROKEN HEART	The Babys
25 (–)	•LONGER FUSE	Dan Hill
26 (23)	NEWS OF THE WORLD	Queen
27 (26)	STAR WARS	Original Soundtrack
28 (25)	DECADE	Neil Young
29 (28)	MY AIM IS TRUE	Elvis Costello
30 (27)	SHOW SOME EMOTION	Joan Armatrading

U.K. SINGLES

This Last Week		
1 (3)	WISHING ON A STAR	Rose Royce
2 (1)	TAKE A CHANCE ON ME	Abba
3 (5)	WUTHERING HEIGHTS	Kate Bush

4 (17)	•DENIS	Blondie
5 (8)	STAYIN' ALIVE	Bee Gees
6 (2)	COME BACK MY LOVE	Darts
7 (4)	MR. BLUE SKY	Electric Light Orchestra
8 (14)	•BAKER STREET	Gerry Rafferty
9 (16)	•I CAN'T STAND THE RAIN	Eruption
10 (6)	JUST ONE MORE NIGHT	Yellow Dog
11 (11)	ALL RIGHT NOW	Free
12 (21)	•EMOTION	Samantha Sang
13 (20)	•IS THIS LOVE	Bob Marley and the Wailers
14 (7)	FIGARO	Brotherhood of Man
15 (10)	LOVE IS LIKE OXYGEN	Sweet
16 (12)	IF I HAD WORDS	Scott Fitzgerald/Yvonne Keely
17 (9)	HOT LEGS/I WAS ONLY JOKING	Rod Stewart
18 (24)	•JUST THE WAY YOU ARE	Billy Joel
19 (18)	FANTASY	Earth, Wind and Fire
20 (23)	RISING FREE	Tom Robinson Band
21 (–)	•LILAC WINE	Elkie Brooks
22 (13)	5 MINUTES	Stranglers
23 (25)	RUMOUR HAS IT	Donna Summer
24 (–)	•WORDS	Rita Coolidge
25 (–)	•EVERY 1'S A WINNER	Hot Chocolate
26 (19)	DRUMMERMAN	Tonight
27 (–)	CLASH CITY ROCKERS	Clash
28 (–)	MATCHSTALK MEN AND MATCHSTALK CATS AND DOGS	Brian and Michael
29 (–)	WALK IN LOVE	Manhattan Transfer
30 (–)	FOLLOW YOU, FOLLOW ME	Genesis

U.K. ALBUMS

This Last Week		
1 (1)	THE ALBUM	Abba
2 (2)	RUMOURS	Fleetwood Mac
3 (3)	VARIATIONS	Andrew Lloyd Webber
4 (4)	OUT OF THE BLUE	Electric Light Orchestra
5 (5)	FOOT LOOSE AND FANCY FREE	Rod Stewart
6 (7)	NEW BOOTS AND PANTIES	Ian Dury
7 (–)	•BUDDY HOLLY LIVES	Buddy Holly
8 (9)	REFLECTIONS	Andy Williams
9 (8)	DONNA SUMMER'S GREATEST HITS	
10 (6)	THE SOUND OF BREAD	Bread
11 (10)	EXODUS	Bob Marley and the Wailers
12 (13)	ALL 'N' ALL	Earth, Wind and Fire
13 (26)	•ABBA'S GREATEST HITS	Abba
14 (16)	DISCO STARS	Various Artists
15 (25)	•DRASTIC PLASTIC	Be-Bop Deluxe
16 (28)	•THE KICK INSIDE	Kate Bush
17 (12)	THE BEATLES LOVE SONGS	Beatles
(–)	•CITY TO CITY	Gerry Rafferty
19 (19)	DARTS	
20 (–)	•CROSSING THE RED SEA WITH THE ADVERTS	Adverts
21 (–)	•STIFF LIVE STIFFS	Various Artists
22 (–)	•BOOGIE NIGHTS	Various Artists
23 (21)	PLASTIC LETTERS	Blondie
(29)	•JESUS OF COOL	Nick Lowe
25 (27)	PASTICHE	Manhattan Transfer
26 (18)	WAITING FOR COLUMBUS	Little Feat
27 (20)	WHITE MUSIC	XTC
28 (17)	THE FLORAL DANCE	Brighouse and Rastrick Band
(–)	TELL US THE TRUTH	Sham 69
30 (14)	WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM LIVE	Tubes
(–)	STAINED CLASS	Judas Priest

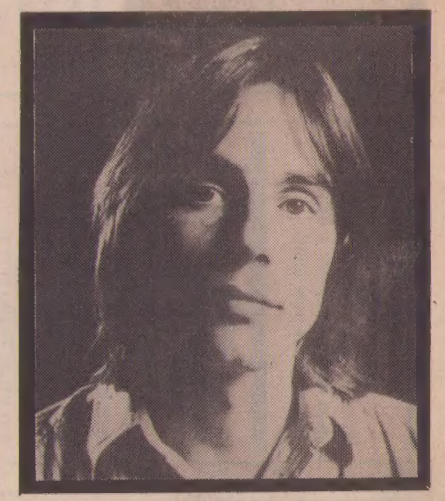
Two titles tied for 17th, 23rd, 28th and 30th positions.

U.S. SINGLES

This Last Week		
1 (2)	EMOTION	Samantha Sang
2 (1)	(LOVE IS) THICKER THAN WATER	Andy Gibb
3 (3)	STAYIN' ALIVE	Bee Gees
4 (6)	NIGHT FEVER	Bee Gees
5 (5)	SOMETIMES WHEN WE TOUCH	Dan Hill
6 (9)	LAY DOWN SALLY	Eric Clapton
7 (7)	WHAT'S YOUR NAME	Lynyrd Skynyrd
8 (8)	PEG	Steely Dan
9 (4)	JUST THE WAY YOU ARE	Billy Joel
10 (12)	I GO CRAZY	Paul Davis
11 (17)	•CAN'T SMILE WITHOUT YOU	Barry Manilow
12 (13)	FALLING	LeBlanc and Carr
13 (14)	THEME FROM CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND	John Williams
14 (16)	THUNDER ISLAND	Jay Ferguson
15 (11)	DANCE, DANCE, DANCE	Chic
16 (18)	WONDERFUL WORLD	Art Garfunkel, James Taylor & Paul Simon
17 (21)	JACK AND JILL	Raydio
18 (19)	THE NAME OF THE GAME	Abba
19 (20)	THE WAY YOU DO THE THINGS YOU DO	Rita Coolidge
20 (22)	ALWAYS AND FOREVER	Heatwave
21 (23)	DUST IN THE WIND	Kansas
22 (24)	HAPPY ANNIVERSARY	Little River Band
23 (25)	GOODBYE GIRL	David Gates
24 (26)	OUR LOVE	Natalie Cole
25 (27)	EBONY EYES	Bob Welch
26 (–)	•IF I CAN'T HAVE YOU	Yvonne Elliman
27 (29)	POOR, POOR PITIFUL ME	Linda Ronstadt
28 (10)	SHORT PEOPLE	Randy Newman
29 (–)	BEFORE MY HEART FINDS OUT	Gene Cotton
30 (–)	THEME FROM WHICH WAY IS UP	Stargard

U.S. ALBUMS

This Last Week		
1 (1)	SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER	Various Artists
2 (2)	THE STRANGER	Billy Joel
3 (3)	NEWS OF THE WORLD	Queen



4 (4)	RUNNING ON EMPTY	Jackson Browne
5 (6)	AJA	Steely Dan
6 (7)	SLOWHAND	Eric Clapton
7 (8)	THE GRAND ILLUSION	Styx
8 (10)	POINT OF KNOW RETURN	Kansas
9 (5)	RUMOURS	Fleetwood Mac
10 (13)	DOUBLE LIVE GONZO	Ted Nugent
11 (12)	WATERMARK	Art Garfunkel
12 (11)	FOOT LOOSE AND FANCY FREE	Rod Stewart
13 (16)	WEEKEND IN L.A.	George Benson
14 (9)	ALL 'N' ALL	Earth, Wind and Fire
15 (28)	•EVEN NOW	Barry Manilow
16 (14)	SIMPLE DREAMS	Linda Ronstadt
17 (17)	LONGER FUSE	Dan Hill
18 (19)	STREET SURVIVORS	Lynyrd Skynyrd
19 (15)	OUT O F THE BLUE	Electric Light Orchestra
20 (25)	WAYLON AND WILLIE	Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson
21 (18)	FUNKENTELECHY VS. THE PLACEBO SYNDROME	Parliament
22 (23)	FRENCH KISS	Bob Welch
23 (27)	BLUE LIGHTS IN THE BASEMENT	Roberta Flack
24 (24)	LIVE AT THE BIJOU	Grover Washington Jnr.,
25 (20)	CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND	Soundtrack
26 (30)	ENDLESS WIRE	Gordon Lightfoot
27 (21)	ALIVE II	Kiss
28 (–)	STREET PLAYER	Rufus
29 (29)	THANKFUL	Natalie Cole
30 (26)	DOWN TWO THEN LEFT	Boz Scaggs

Charts courtesy Kent Music

This man wants to be the Svengali of Rock

AND HE'LL CALL THE WORLD AT 4.00 am TO SAY SO.

Anthony O'Grady

Last week **Kim Fowley** rang up. He stayed on the phone about two hours, playing me records, asked questions about the state of the Oz rock industry, and gave me his latest hype, an amazing-sounding, 16 year old blonde girl guitarist/singer, Dyan Diamond.

Kim Fowley was calling from Los Angeles, mind you. His two hours would have cost him close to $500, but Kim doesn't let details stand in the way when he has a mission to fulfil. At the moment (well, last week at least) the mission was claiming Dyan Diamond's rightful place as the female Elvis Presley of the '80's (it's already too late to claim someone as the Star of Seventies). Kim Fowley *(who's he?)* is, you might have gathered, just a leeeeeeeeeetle eccentric.

Well no, that's not true. He's a whole lot eccentric. But very clever. Whether he's ever widely recognised as a genius (which is what he calls himself) will probably depend on whether he ever pulls an ultimate scam, and comes up with something with as much long term effect as the Beatles, Stones or Dylan.

Either way, his achievements already make a fascinating, if somewhat oddball, list. He is now 36 years old and has been awarded a total of 54 gold and 11 platinum albums. Some of 'em he produced from basic concept to black vinyl. Many others he got 'cos he wrote, or co-wrote, or published, or co-published a song or two on the elpee.

But he *did* assemble all the music for the *American Graffiti* movie and album. And he *is* currently Helen Reddy's producer. And he did originate, form, write for and produce The Runaways, the all-girl, raunch-rock band that were fun in '76, but alas, barely make even the *Oh Weren't They* **Last** *Year's Thing* list in '78.

Which reminds us, The Runaways were supposed to tour Oz in May '77 but never showed. Pity about that, 'cos album sales were bubbling promisingly in anticipation. But it was all a bit like buying candy for a girl who bombs out on the date, and the bottom fell out of the market. "Well," says Fowley, after making sure all this is going down on tape (he might be eccentric enough to call half-way around the world to someone he's met just once, and speak for nearly two hours. But he's clever enough to make sure the whole thing is treated as a historical event): "OK you wanna know why The Runaways didn't show. OK, one of the girls had a mishap to her wrists." *(He means bass player Jackie Fox's rumoured attempted suicide).*

"Exactly what happened I don't know, I was in California at the time. But suddenly the band in Japan is down to a three-piece. One came home early with a real injury, another came back *(I think he means guitarist Joan Jett)* with a phantom injury.

"I am now no longer dealing with them," says Fowley, proving he too knows about the *Oh Weren't They* **Last** *Year's Thing list.* "I think the dream is over. I had a vision about them for them, but . . .

"BUT . . . *dum da dum da dum*," he exhorts, "while the Runaways were the female equivalent of the Beatles, I have now discovered the girl equivalent of Elvis Presley. Her name is Dyan Diamond and that is why I am calling you.

"She's 16 now. At 14 she was the youngest in Venus and The Razor Blades *(a group Fowley formed to stave off boredom between traumas with the Runaways).*

"HI! This is Big Daddy Kim Fowley and I've got a hot stack of trax to play you. Just pick up your phone and listen."

"You might recall," he concludes triumphantly, "Venus and The Razor Blades had two records at the bottom of the English charts last year."

"Now can you imaaaaaaaaaagine," croooooooons Fowley, "a blonde, beautiful 16 year old wearing leopard skin on stage and doing very aggressive rock 'n' roll at very loud volume.

"Has that caught up and passed Suzi Quatro already?" he asks.

Well, probably. But why call Australia about it?

"Australia should have her too," he argues persuasively. "She's for the whole world.

"But also", he says, "Dyan has been invited to go to Japan in June—ironically enough, for the same Festival the Runaways were invited to last year. "And this time, if there's better co-ordination, we'll combine Japan/Australia and you can go wild when you see Dyan on stage."

Then, for the next half hour, he pumps relentlessly for details on Oz record companies, publicity companies, the state of television/radio . . .

"Better cut a lot of this stuff," he warns. "The readers will think it's boring."

Well yes, they also know most of it already.

"Let me tell you what happened in Germany," he subject changes suddenly. "Venus and The Razor Blades were playing the Whiskey in Los Angeles and *Bravo,* the big German rock magazine, came down and just shot *her*, didn't shoot pix of the rest of the group at all. Then the story came out in Germany and she got tremendous fan mail response.

"You've never seen anything like her on stage. The band is real good too. There's a player from Venus and The Razor Blades. The bass player was with Roxy Music, the drummer was with Jack Bruce. The slowest song she does all night is the Stones' *Don't Play With Fire.*

"If you've got a minute," he says, "I'll play her single over the phone . . ."

There is a series of clicks as he pushes cassette buttons.

"Does this sound like an odd phone call to you, or what?" he chortles.

Well no, it sounds like a *Kim Fowley phone call* to me. When I visited his place in Los Angeles in late '76, he spent half the night ringing England on the off-chance of picking up publishing for Nick Lowe, who back then, was mostly known for producing the first Graham Parker elpee. But Fowley had heard one Nick Lowe song just once, and was convinced; he *had* to have a piece of the action. That he was right is testified to by the critical plaudits and initial high overseas sales of Lowe's first album *Jesus Of Cool. (Released in Oz in late March).*

"Pick up the extension again," Fowley exhorted me that night, as the hours overlapped towards 4.00 am. "Now I've got his record company on the line and I'm gonna *hustle* them.

"You know," says Fowley in the present, still pressing buttons on a cassette somewhere in Los Angeles, "when I believe in something I'll call Japan, I'll call the world . . . OK, here we go . . . be honest with me . . . *Hey;* what would happen if this was a hit and it all evolved from this telephone conversation with you." Eeeeeerrrrrr, would you cut me in for a small share of the royalties? And then he plays the single.

I can't really hear the words, or any drums. And that dull roar in the background could be bass, but was probably satellite interference. There's a moment of clean, nifty lead guitar and two clear lines of a chorus that goes *'Bend me, shape me, anyway you want me.'* On the basis it just sounds messy whereas, most times, records played over the phone sound shithouse-awful, I think it's a good record. Certainly it has a tang of excitement to it. "Look at it this way," encourages Fowley. "It's always possible there *is* a female Elvis who'll turn the whole rock world around.

"The men have exhausted rock, they've done all that can be done. And they've kept women to a very limited range of roles. There's the good girl, the tough girl, the weak girl, the bad girl. But her role always depends on what the man is playing.

"OK. So now we're getting women who want to take better roles. Blondie departed from the normal pattern, but so what? Most people still wanna hear Robert Plant, 'cos he's better.

"*But ultimately,* a girl will show up who's *so* talented, *no one* will be able to say 'she's talented—for a girl'.

"No one ever says, *'Jagger's good—for a guy'*

"But the men have now done it all in rock. For them it's finished. It only remains for the right women to emerge."

"What I am looking for for Dyan is that she is the *best possible person* to have on-stage for sweaty nights of loud rock in crowded rooms." But Kim, **you're** *male.* If this philosophy takes hold, where will you be? "Are you saying I should wear drag?" asks Fowley, offended. "I've been in drag before, it doesn't bother me."

And then I think—isn't this a bit *weird,* this man talking such *hype* about the emergence of a *genuine* female rock star. And then I remember Col. Tom Parker's massive hype for Elvis, Brian Epstein's massive hype for The Beatles, Andrew Loog Oldham's hyper-hype for The Rolling Stones, and . . . . . *.bingo!* Kim Fowley wants to be the Svengali of rock 'n' roll.

"I've been in rock since 1959," he says, "and very little excites me now. But when something moves me, I'll call Australia."

And then he plays me two more records. This time from two post-dated males—Tommy Rock ("he used to be a department store guard, now he's a star) and Carl Wynberg ("a one man Beach Boys. Do they like surfing music in Australia?")

But they're other stories for another time. Or maybe we've just told 'em.

CIVIL WAR AT 2JJ?

Last week rumours swept Sydney that Bob Hudson, morning announcer on the ABC progressive rock station 2JJ, had been suspended. After all, Hudson *wasn't* on air, and he *had* mouthed off to *Sydney Morning Herald* journalist Lindsay Scott about JJ. He accused the station management of being a cross between a 1967 hippie convention and the 1958 Mickey Mouse Club.

Bob Hudson captured in a rare moment of reflective silence.

Hudson went on to blast the JJ system of "democratic management participation" where everyone in the station voted for or against policy suggestions. The station, he said, was populated with Balmain trendies and old hippies. He also claimed that Sydney's ultra-commercial 2SM was, in fact, more politically radical than JJ.

Hudson's absence from the airwaves directly after publication is believed to have started the suspension rumours.

In fact, Hudson had merely gone on holidays. The text of his attacks was also nothing new. He had aired the same views many times during his regular morning show.

"The reaction to the article at the station," says 2JJ co-ordinator Ted Robinson, "was fairly mild. We're a collection of individuals with individual liberties. Some people around the station were amused, a few were slightly aggravated. Bob himself said he was slightly disappointed he'd done an interview for an hour and a half but only the more blatant opinions were run."

X GO TO JAIL

Dick Tracy.

It was just an ordinary afternoon for Band X. Band leader Ian Ryland (ex-Rose Tattoo) had the boys around to celebrate his daughter's third birthday, music was being played, a good time was being had by all.

The first indication the merry crew had that all was not well was when the phuzz arrived and told them to turn down.

An hour later the phuzz came back again and, after a short but heated argument, dragged Ian Ryland away. They also grabbed guitarist Ian Cray.

Ryland, ever the well dressed prisoner, grabbed a pair of silk Chinese slippers to match his white floppy trousers, white floppy shirt and one-inch narrow black and red striped tie.

Happily the two X's were discharged the next day, just in time for their regular Wednesday night gig at the Unicorn pub in Sydney.

SUICIDE RECORDS ARE COMING
"PURE POP FOR MODERN PEOPLE"
TO BE DEPOSED OF BY RCA

Jo Jo spits nails

DEFINITELY, IT WOZ WUNNA DEM NITES

By: Andrew McMillan

Joe Camilleri is ranting. The Falcons have just finished a rare lacklustre gig at Sydney Uni and Joe's as mad as hell. "And don't tell me to 'get my shit together' on stage! I was bloody working out there!" He's been off-stage barely two minutes and already he's launching a tirade against *everyone.* This boy definitely ain't in the mood to settle down to a coherent interview. In fact, he doesn't want to know about it. And no wonder! It was the first time I've ever seen a lacklustre gig from these guys. The Falcons didn't think Joe was working and vice-versa. Admittedly, the acoustics were terrible and the audience a difficult mixture of mellow I-hardly-ever-go-to-concerts uni students and laid-back kids off the street. And, Jo Jo Zep and the Falcons were playing support to Richard Clapton which didn't make it any easier. Consequently, the dressing room is like a peak hour traffic jam. Heavy.

Even at the best of times The Falcons often take a long time to warm up — and this night it's long enough to turn almost anybody off. But once firing, Jo Jo Zep and the Falcons are *the* hottest R&B act around. They sweat, they rage, and they come across with the goods.

Unfortunately, by their own standards, that flash still hasn't been captured on vinyl. Joe says even their new five track E.P. *Loud And Clear* is lame in comparison to da real thing. To be fair, it *has* got more flash than the band's studio albums *Don't Waste It* and *Whip It Out.*

Recorded last December at Martinis in Melbourne, only one track *Girl Across The Street* has been released before. And that stands up much better than it did on *Whip It Out.*

Joe Camilleri disagrees. "It's nowhere near as good as the previous material.

"I fought for that e.p.! It's mine! I produced it! I fought for it from scratch! I lost on it! The pressing's *aaaaaagh!* But, I did it for the people who want to hear the band live.

"I wouldn't have to do that anywhere else! Overseas, people don't say 'Well the album's good, but what are they like live?' They only do that here to Australian bands!"

Despite this, Joe wants to do a live e.p. every year. "Yeah, I wanna do *Loud And Clear II, Loud And Clear III.* Well, maybe not so *clear.*"

So what else is happening? Well, the band is working in the pubs and a few concert venues, "presenting concerts in the lowest of dives." *Whip It Out* is due for release in Europe next month, the band is getting a mysterious O/S producer in for their next album and oops . . . just a sec . . . someone's complaining saxophonist Wilbur Wilde is tearing a door down.

Two ferocious ragers blow their own horns — Joe Camilleri and Wilbur Wilde. (pic Mal Berry).

Wilbur was once a highlight of OI '55 — and OI '55 haven't forgotten it. Wilbur's place in the Falcons was inevitable. Camilleri admires his style that much. Even when his lanky frame was causing havoc within the ranks of OI '55 Joe was raving about him. Now he's got him. And the Fives are still relating anecdotes about the Wilde man as if he were some mystical maniac — which, quite possibly, he is. OI '55's Jim Manzie once said, "Even The Falcons are finding Wilbur a bit much to cope with. The only reason he's still with them is that they're too scared to get rid of him."

From Camilleri though, the story's different. "We might fight like dogs, but I love the guy's style. He's got two things to learn. One, he needs not to play as much. Two, he needs to play more of himself. Then, he'll be amazing.

"If I get another 15% out of this band in a year, I'll be laughing. The attitude today is the strongest I've ever had. I'm managing the band and I'm working.

"All I wanna do is work. I'm sick of being underpaid. I'm sick of us being classed as a pub band you can see any night. The only people who make money out of us are the airlines and the hire-cars.

"And I wanna get my teeth fixed, and that takes money — lots of it. If I have to go overseas to make it, then I will. But I'm gonna come back here and tear the place apart!"

THERE'S STILL ROMANCE IN HEAVY METAL.

Meet Bob Daisley, Oz bass player with Ritchie Blackmore's Rainbow

By: Anthony O'Grady.

About eight months ago, the debris that had been Ritchie Blackmore's Rainbow sorted itself out. After hastily ridding himself of bass player Jimmy Bain and keyboard player Tony Carey, Blackmore was faced with an imminent tour and studio sessions for a new album, but Rainbow was down to a power trio of just himself, singer Ronnie James Dio and drummer Cozy Powell.

Blackmore, the man RAM readers have rated the Second Best guitarist in the world (just behind J. Page Esq.) two years in succession, scrambled through a few dates with a makeshift band, re-hired Carey for a while before employing new boy David Stone and, fifty bass players later, welcomed Bob Daisley into the fold.

Turns out Bob Daisley is an Australian who's lived and worked around England for the past seven years.

Currently he's back in Oz, tasting his mom's cooking for the first time this decade.

"We've just finished Japan," he says happily slurping the dubious RAM tea. "It would have been *so great* if we could have toured here. We wanted to, but there were so many bands down here or just about to get here — Beach Boys, Dylan, Boz Scaggs . . . it was getting ridiculous. But the band *will* be here, later in the year, or early next year. I'm *really* looking forward to that."

Yep it's a real musician's dream, maybe even fantasy fulfilment, to return home playing a band that's B-I-G. And Bob Daisley is mighty chuffed to complete the circle as a member of Rainbow.

After being in a series of Sydney bands since '66 (Dennis Williams and The Dellaways, The Throb, The Gino Affair, Barrington Davis and The Power Pact, Mecca), Daisley left Oz to join Karvas Jute, an outfit trying their luck in England. Luck didn't happen, but Daisley eventually found himself in British blues band Chicken Shack, with Christine Perfect (now Christine McVie of Fleetwood Mac) and guitarist Stan Webb ("A great blues player" enthuses Bob). Then there was Mungo Jerry, then another band with Stan Webb called Broken Glass. Then Widowmaker, a heavy metal outfit directed by ELO's management.

Soon after all that, a friend suggested to Bob Daisley he knew a friend who wanted a bass player.

Oh yeah, said Bob, who?

Ritchie Blackmore, said the friend.

Soon after, Daisley got a call from Blackmore who invited him for a drink and a chat.

"He didn't mention *anything* about wanting a bass player," takes up Daisley, "but a few days later he called again and said *'Feel like a play?'* I went down to the studio and there was just Ritchie and Cozy Powell and Ronnie James.

Ritchie said, *'Can you play a shuffle?'* I said, yeah. *'OK'*, he said, *'in G . . . 1.2.3.4'.* And away he went. About 30 bars later he said *'Can you play a blues? . . . 1.2.3.4 . . .'* He went through all the feels . . .

"Then I said, 'I'm gonna go for a piss now and let you talk about me.' When I came back he said *We like what you do, you've got the job'."*

Was he overjoyed?

"Oh sure, but what really made me glad was they'd already tried out about fifty bass players. I woulda felt a bit nervous joining if it was a case of 'we're **desperate** for a bass player' It might only be for three months, to do a tour. Then they would have fucked me off, y'know."

Eight months later, after a gruelling Continental tour, a fast thrust thru Japan and a month of sessions for an upcoming Rainbow album behind him, Daisley is feeling confident as a fully integrated Rainbow member.

That is, if *anyone* can feel confident with Ritchie, the man who's been known to throw tantrums of awesome size. *"I have no friends because I don't like people"* is archetypal Ritchie-speak.

"No, he's like that," laughs Daisley. "At first I was worried about his reputation too. But he's just not like that. Actually," he

confesses, "Ritchie doesn't need to work anymore. He plays for enjoyment. His main thing is a professional attitude. He pisses off people very quickly who just wanna party. Mind you, he does have a notice on his dressing room, *'Nobody Allowed In'*, and that sort of thing keeps up the reputation.

"The band has fights," Bob concludes, "but no more than any other. We get on as well as most.

"The main thing for me, actually, is playing with Cozy. That's my main job and it's a real kick up the arse everytime I'm onstage. You just can't afford to be slack or out of it when you're playing with someone like Cozy, he'd trample all over you."

Now Daisley is in a big international band, he's cossetted and pampered with pre-requisite rock star luxuries while on tour. All tour and accommodation arrangements are made for him by a ubiquitous tour manager.

Such royal living also offers the chance for drug and sex excesses and the various line ups of Blackmore's previous group, Deep Purple, certainly weren't immune — a syndrome that came to a climax after guitarist Tommy Bolin left the band and subsequently overdosed to death.

"Yes, it's something that's very easy to slip into," agrees Daisley. "Mandies to sleep, speed to wake up . . . a snort of coke before the show . . . some reds to slow down after the show. More coke at a party in the hotel . . . more reds to sleep . . . more speed to wake up . . . it's something you can't let happen. It's hard enough being on the road without putting too much of that in your way."

Finally, are you a rich man now Bob?

"Well I'm doin' OK," he laughs. "When I joined, they paid me a weekly retainer . . . plus we all get the same living allowance when we're on the road. Plus I get a very small percentage of the tour profits. Not as much as the others but then, I'm the newest member. But there is room to up. Like songwriting is where the big money is 'cos you get a percentage of every album sold, and Ritchie has said if I've got any ideas he'd like to hear them for the next album. So I've got a few and we'll see how it goes.

"But it's a good organisation, and there's no problem with money. Like when I wanted to come to Australia after Japan, they paid my fare and gave me extra spending money.

"They're nice people to work for and I'm really looking forward to touring Australia with 'em."

POSTSCRIPT: *Veteran RAM readers might recall The Ritchie Blackmore Left-Handed Guitar Dispute that arose when we published a pic of Ritchie surrounded with right handed* **and** *left handed guitars. What the hell was Ritchie doing with* **left-handed** *guitars?*

"Somebody once asked him that," says Bob. "Apparently it stretches back to when Jimi Hendrix used to take right handed guitars and play them upside down. So Ritchie did it with left-handed guitars. But that was years ago. Someone asked him why and he said **'Well I'm so good I've gotta have some sort of handicap'."**

SUICIDE RECORDS ARE COMING
"PURE POP FOR MODERN PEOPLE"
TO BE DEPOSED OF BY RCA

THE MARCIA HINES CLASS RE-UNION

By: Anthony O'Grady.

The class reunion of '77 took off from Kingsford-Smith Airport at 2.00pm.

The class had chartered a small Cessna and there was spontaneous applause when it lifted effortlessly off the ground into the hot blue sky. Everyone agreed it was far more pleasant than driving and the class supervisor, Peter Rix, chortled not only was it more pleasant, it was less expensive than doing the trip in hire cars.

"I wish we'd done this last year," he groaned thinking of the comfort gained and the cost saved. "We'll certainly do it this way next time," he said. There was a short pause then his eyes lost their enthusiastic glow. "Whenever next time *is*," he says. The class of '77 have one thing in common, they are musical graduates. They are adult and proud of it.

If they ever indulged in the shambling teenage lusts that are so part and parcel of rock band life, it was long ago. "In *this* band," says Michael Bukovsky who plays trumpet and lectures at the Conservatorium of Music, "the roadies tell us *'We are the pop stars, not you.'*

"And they are right," he smiles.

Michael, for the past three years, has played with the Marcia Hines Band, an intensive course covering Australasia from coast to coast and around again. Plus side trips to New Guinea and Noumea. Graduation was late last year after a four month, 64-date tour when Marcia announced she might not tour again for as long as eighteen months.

Today's trip is just what we've been calling it — a class reunion for a one-off date at the Maitland Country Fair.

The Maitland organisers are supposedly ecstatic at getting Marcia. Originally the Newcastle Country Fair wanted her but Maitland, being rivals to Newcastle, heard about this and promptly offered more money.

The Marcia Hines Band is the closest equivalent Australia has to the sets of seasoned sessionmen who accompany Big Names like Leon Russell and Thelma Houston around America.

The only thing is, unlike most top notch American backing bands, the Marcia Hines Band has very few members who were raised on rock.

"We did it with rock players for the first two years," says Marcia's manager Peter Rix, "and it was so unreliable. It was too hard to get people to rehearse, it was impossible to get a consistent standard of playing.

"We didn't want super-slickness, but we didn't want people falling over on stage either. We finally found most of the players we needed away from the rock scene. They know music, they're reliable, they're enthusiastic about playing, they're professional. They're not the usual trained musician who wants a steady job in a club orchestra."

Naturally there has to be a leader of the band, and in Marcia's case, it's bass player Jackie Orszaczky. He gained a musical education in Hungary and eventually arrived in Australia with Syrius, a jazz rock outfit who had all the qualifications to make it big in the late '60's when groups like Tamam Shud and Tully were reigning supreme as progressive rockers. Instead, they ended up starving. Welcome to the Free Enterprise System Kids.

In Hungary, where Jackie was trained, the only way a musician could starve, was if he was a *rotten* musician. They have a system of musical graduation over there. A band starts in the very small clubs and when they feel they're ready for a rise, they take an exam to see if they can qualify for the next step up the ladder, in bigger clubs. If they gain further expertise, they might get to be licensed to play headlining gigs at concert halls.

At least you always know where you are, and what you have to do to move higher on the ladder.

In the more freewheeling capitalistic world, Jackie's ambition is to move to New York and play the jazz clubs — places featuring talents such as Chick Corea and Stanley Clarke. "It is senseless for me to stay here and do it all over again, around and around" he says, repeating the complaint of just about every seasoned musician in Australia, no matter what style he/she plays. Why go round and round in Australia man, may as well go round and round in America.

Ah America, the promised land of milk and honey.

Mark Kennedy on the other hand is sticking to Australia for the time being. *He* was raised on rock in Oz and came through to musical maturity via the first Spectrum, Ayers Rock and later, Marcia.

He and Marcia lived together for nearly three years but the relationship finally got buried in a tangle of recording sessions, gigging and too little home life. Old cliches still have truth-power and it's hard to keep love alive when *she's* the star and *he's* the drummer in the band. Because concerts are staged around the star, and where does that leave the man of the house when he's one of the background boys?

And besides all this, Mark was fast losing his reputation as the premier drummer in Oz buried as he was in Marcia's background. So much so, that when he did a session on a Daryl Braithwaite single, producer Richard Lush screamed, "This guy is great. *WHERE HAS HE BEEN ALL MY LIFE!?!*" Richard has only been in Australia for nearly seven years.

After moving out of Marcia's life and graduating from her band, Kennedy is playing with Trevor White (a smaller band, so he has more chance to shine) and recording his own album in gradual stages.

Believe it or not, the guitar player in Marcia's band, Steve Housden, is from the same rock environment as Bob Spencer from Skyhooks. They grew up in neighbouring suburbs and played in rival suburban rock bands. "After that we took different paths," grins Steve.

For all their smooth expertise, Jackie, Mark and Steve are the intuitive players in the band. Which means they'd rather work to a musical feeling than a chart.

The keyboard players, Frank Ester-Smith and Warren Ford are classically trained, as are the brass section Michael Bukovsky, Michael Cleary, Richard Gawned and Greg Mason.

Another Marcia band regular, percussionist Sunil De Silva didn't make the re-union.

As soon as the troupe arrives at the Maitland Show, whoooooosh . . . two security guards attach themselves to Marcia so close everytime they open their mouths they're nibbling her ear. Marcia herself fits into the troupe like a more-than-usually-exotic Queen of the Prom at a high school dance. The Maitland Show people bustle around her like jewellery store attendants when Liz Taylor walks through the door. The class of '77, having fitted a sound check in between equestrian events on the oval, climb into their '77 tour black red and silver suits. By now it's about 9.00pm, and Trevor White is just finishing his set.

"Oh God," says Marcia as the amplified drum sound rolls across the cow paddock, "I'm glad we're here, I *love* to hear Mark play."

By now it's after 9.00pm and dew has settled onto the grass. By the time Marcia arrives on stage in a flash of red chiffon, sections of the crowd are already leaving, brushing at the moisture that has seeped inexorably through clothes and made buttocks clammy.

The show itself is a smooth run-through of most of the intensively arranged, intensely played material on the new *Marcia Live Across Australia* double elpee. Except there are too many ballads and the grass gets wetter, and more and more people move to the warmth of the stand or out into sideshow alley. There is no encore.

"We went up there, made some money and came home again," shrugs Peter Rix. "It was totally unmemorable except for the fact the sound check was delayed two hours while people rode horses around the field."

But the band and Marcia are relaxed and happy, it was good to play together again while they all remembered the songs and arrangements.

Trevor White, former Jesus from *JC Superstar* starts a relaxed singalong of *"Mucus Is My Life, my life is mucus . . . haaaaawwwwwwkkkk!!!,"* a none too subtle send up of Marcia's new single, *Music Is My Life.* There's applause as the pilot lifts off the Cessna, then again, thirty eight minutes later, as he lands it safely at Kingsford Smith.

"It's good to see everyone together again," beams Peter Rix. "I really like these guys and I'm glad the time they've spent with Marcia on the road has opened up new opportunities for them now the touring's stopped. They're all responsible people who can organise themselves."

Yes, they're graduates.

Meanwhile, maybe because old habits are hard to break, but probably because they still share respect and friendship, Marcia snuggles into Mark Kennedy's arms and sleeps cosily while Kennedy carefully blows cigarette smoke at the plane's ceiling to keep it from her closed eyes.

Perhaps the best part of class reunions is reliving memories . . .

The Marcia Hines Class of '77 (most of 'em anyway) line up for the Graduation Photo. Heads of the class (Jackie Orszaczky, Marcia, Mark Kennedy) get to sit up front.

WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON OUT THERE?

Dick Tracy

On the night of December 2 and during the morning of the following day, many Americans living along the East Coast were shocked awake by the sound of seven large explosions for which scientists and military experts can find no explanation.

Dr William Donn, an atmospheric scientist who has been examining the blasts, speculated that each one was caused by the detonation of 50 to 100 tons of dynamite above the surface and about 50 miles out to sea off the coast of South Carolina.

Then on December 12 it happened again — five more blasts between 8.30 and 10.30 am. Dr Donn commented: "What caused them is quite a mystery. They were the strongest we've ever picked up on our equipment, except for nuclear blasts."

Early in the New Year came news that, in England, observers in Cornwall had been having trouble with unidentified bangs too. Some coastguards reported that the blasts were strong enough to rock their observation posts.

None of the bangs fits in with Concorde's flight schedules, and a number of other possibilities have also bottomed out. Coastguard Peter Barker said: "There is something going on out there that defies explanation."

There's still no official word on the subject.

On January 12 it happened yet again. Residents in Charleston, South Carolina flooded police switchboards to report the bangs.

One resident said: "I've felt most of the booms, and this was the worst. I was running down the stairs and things were shaking so much I was afraid to make it."

Another said: "It sounded like the ocean rolling in. It rumbled right over the house, moved the chairs on the floor, and shook the windows so much I was afraid they would break."

Of course, there's probably a simple, rational explanation to all this . . .

Hope they find it before the boom crosses the Atlantic to Oz.

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FAIR WARNING: THE SAINTS ARE COMING BACK TO GETCHA!

Halo-Carrier: Michael Porteus.

Sometime this year, Ed Kuepper opines, Australia will be ready for a new wave . . . it will be hip to like real rock and roll for the first time in ages.

You might think this would be the perfect situation for the Saints' return from their London base to remove your collective heads from your collective shoulders etc., but though The Saints *are* returning to Oz v. soon for a short tour, Ed wouldn't be surprised if the Saints miss the newly-chic punk boat.

There was a time of course when Ed was hopeful. He has always had a very subjective view of the Saints. He honestly expected *(I'm) Stranded* to be liked — even loved — for what it was, a superlative heavypop single. But he was young then.

He's older now. He knows Australia is a place where bands can't pay their petrol bills. He realises that his record company finds it much easier to promote something shipped in from America. Ed Kuepper is the most progressive Australian guitarist I have ever seen.

I thought I'd slip *that* in there while you were gloating over the Saints' problems. Admittedly I haven't seen any of the new bunch of Oz players, and Ed certainly doesn't have the spunky finesse of Harvey, the longevity of Borich or the heroic dash of wee Angus Young.

But he churns out a better basic wall of chords than any of them. His playing gives me the feeling of being caught in a hailstorm of bolts. You don't have to see his lock-jawed, eyes-closed stage act to smell the stench of determination. It is not complex or clever. But wow, it certainly works — and it seems to get better every gig I see. Ed is still learning, still progressing. But as he points out, that doesn't mean he's getting further away from basics.

While I'm going completely over the top, I may as well mention that Ed is the most modern Oz composer so far this decade (*he writes the music to all the Saints original material*) and that he and the band have now also turned themselves into pretty fair record producers. Their recent EP *One Two Three Four* showed the band knows how to put themselves on a record much better than any EMI Australia hireling. Oh yeah, he's also a nice guy, his only vice being a strong desire to punch people who say he rips off The Ramones.

I mean, anyone who can play as well as him is entitled to think they are as good as Steve Jones. (He was in the Pistols, dummy). But it is only after numerous drinks and much questioning that Ed can be got to mumble any opinion — one he doesn't expect too many people to agree with.

On playing: "I'm really much more interested in chords than I am in lead solos. I play some solos, so I want to make them good, but I like good chords most. At the moment I haven't played for two weeks (*displays moderately shaky hands*) because my guitars are being repaired, and that's terrible."

On musical influences: "I've been listening to music since I was seven or eight — since The Beatles first started. But most music just drifted by apart from a few things that remained good. I continued to like The Kinks (for example). Stuff like the Stooges were OK, but they were a bit later in the piece. I've been aware of them since about 1970 and I wouldn't say they haven't influenced us. But I think that has been overplayed by the English rock press — they are really racist and they will never admit that anything original can come from anywhere but England or America.

"The Ramones album came out a week before *Stranded,* but we had already recorded it and if it hadn't been for a fuck-up by the company that was pressing it we would have beat them. I think it goes back to similar influences there too. We both listened to '50s music. Also, we both don't use vocal back up sections and we use guitars to fill in the void." (*Many would disagree, but to these ears, the Ramone drone and the Kuepper hard-edge are distinctly different guitar sounds*).

On draining his glass: "I'll have a double gin and tonic please."

On the future: "We've done a new album and it will be out here in about March and in Australia whenever EMI gets around to it.

"We'll continue to be based in England. We can survive as a band here, we can't in Australia. I don't know how long our record company will continue to support us — it depends on how it goes this year. If they stop supporting us we might break up, but I honestly expect us to become more popular this year. Eventually, when it is all over, I'll go back to Australia. It's a better place to live.

"We are developing as we go along. The new album is different to the first, but it is still very full. (*Hint: the Saints use brass on two tracks, one of which is 'Know Your Product', the new single*).

On other bands: Ed doesn't like The Pistols, even before they broke up, ("not progressing—just rehashing the same Eddie Cochrane riff over and over") or The Clash ("their record isn't bad, but I resent the Clash number plate on their Rolls Royce") or The Jam ("too derivative"). He doesn't seem to mind The Ramones. He has all their albums and describes their music as "bubblegum".

"I have never seen a good band in Australia," he says.

"The Saints are about as unsubtle as you can get — but we are still too subtle for most people," Ed says. For instance, the band works on a subsidiary level of screaming humour — but not many people realise it and don't even laugh when they play *Lipstick On Your Collar.* "We'll have to do somethin' about that this tour," Ed reflects. But in fact doing something about a presentation problem are things the Saints have a delightful disregard for.

Ed also reckons the Saints have never played a decent gig in Australia. They have never played to a young audience, and they never could talk EMI into hiring them a decent sound system. But in London their own gigs always go down well. They are certainly not the most-popular band in the city, but they can always fill the Marquee. Ed says they are doing OK financially — he is as affluent as he used to be in Brisbane on the dole, and that's not too bad in England.

He will leave you with a fond word for British audiences: "In a lot of ways they are more positive than they are in Australia. I guess throwing a paper cup at you is much better than what they do in Sydney — walk out."

That's funny, it strikes me that by far the simplest thing to do when the Saints play is dance.

RICHARD HELL

THE VOIDOID LIVETH. BUT WHY?

Andrew McMillan

Richard Hell was an originator of the English punk movement. That in itself is extraordinary 'cos Hell's from New York — and as any '76 punk'll tell ya, New York's run by a bunch of thirty year old has-beens. Hell was in Television long before the "arty" days of *Marquee Moon* and it was he who coined the much abused term "Blank Generation". For him, blank "is a line where you can fill in anything. It's positive. It's the idea that you have the option of making yourself anything you want by filling in the blank."

Today, Richard Hell is being acclaimed as one of *the* seventies poets.

But to Hell, whose poetry is the release of a self-confessed introverted tormented mind, the only solution is death.

When Television was a rock'n'roll band, Richard Hell was in it — wearing a torn T-shirt that in essence, said *I refuse to accept your society. I reject it as it has rejected me.* But he left Television when Tom Verlaine took over and they lost sight of what Hell saw going down.

So he joined the Heartbreakers, another New York outfit who gained prominence after his departure. The liaison was short-lived and Hell was seen wandering around in a *Please Kill Me* T-shirt. Obviously, he didn't have the conviction to do it himself.

Seeing himself as an alienated product of the seventies, Hell returned to rock'n'roll because, as he told Lester Bangs, "Rock'n' roll is the frontier of consciousness, the place where you face in everything you do, the unsentimental question of whether the struggle to remain alive is greater than what you derive from being alive."

Richard Hell, y'see, is a thinker. A self-destructive one to be sure, but still a thinker with the perception to grasp the problems of life in the seventies. Fortunately, (or unfortunately depending on your own outlook,) his concept of life is far different to the majority viewpoint. But then, does the majority think, or does it blindly ignore?

It's Hell's venomous appraisal of the basic futility of our existence that's spat forth on his recently released album *Blank Generation.* It's the rejection of all shades of emotion as something that we lost long ago; the cynical (he says *clinical*) view of songs in the vein of *Love Comes In Spurts,* which telegraphs his futility in four simple words.

And, like most acts of destruction, Hell replaces his with nothing but a rock'n'roll onslaught that smashes everything and asks only *Who Says It's Good To Be Alive?*

Which, it seems, is reason enough for him to be picked up as one of the seventies rock poets along with Springsteen and Smith whose works seem mellow, almost oh-isn't-life-grand in comparison. For Richard Hell it seems to come down to finding a reason to pull the trigger. After all, the only reason he gives for his continued existence is that living, like junk, has become a habit.

Or maybe he just wants to be A STAR.

TALKING HEADS ON THE TV

Andrew McMillan

David Byrne is considered one of the most talented song writers of the post-war generations. His forte is choosing a subject and identifying with it. He can write about a surburban worker who gains pleasure through watching a movie or reading a good book, without any trace of superior cynicism or moral castigation. Byrne simply becomes the subject and employs his talent, doing away with the age old embellishments of lyrical posturing.

David Byrne is the lead guitarist, vocalist and songwriter for the Talking Heads, a New York band that gained prominence in '75 when the C.B.G.B.'s club in Manhattan found itself the centre of New York's New Wave scene.

Originally formed at the Rhode Island School of Design, Talking Heads (David Byrne, Chris Frantz and Martina Weymouth) moved to the Big Apple in early '75.

At the time, Weymouth, a petite blonde whose features are undermined by a slightly asexual manner, was singing. But the search for a fourth member in Manhattan proved fruitless so she took up bass guitar. It was a wise move that added depth to an otherwise sparse, conservatively delivered sound; Frantz' drumming, (like his art school influences of Warhol and the Minimalists), being brisk and terse.

After the demise of Jonathan Richman's Modern Lovers, guitarist and keyboard player Jerry Harrison was added to the line-up.

It's possibly due to the C.B.G.B.'s connection that the Talking Heads have been pigeon-holed as a New Wave band. But that they definitely ain't — within the '78 rock context anyway. They are distinct in that their songs and their music aren't a reaction against society or a deliberate put-down of it. In fact, they're more akin to a light, witty version of their name-sake: talking heads being a term for news-readers who appear on the teev every night to deliver an unemotional report on the state of society.

It was this attitude, purveyed in such songs as *Don't Worry About The Government,* that failed to impress the anarchistic English punks when the Heads toured with the Ramones last year.

Consequently, a strong cult following is as far as the Talking Heads have progressed.

Written by Byrne, each number is disarmingly individual — veering close to nothing that's been around before. So, on the first listen, it's instantly despicable — there being nothing familiar to grasp. Somehow though, it sticks in your subconscious and keeps resurfacing, no matter how much you hate it.

Consequently, the Talking Heads' first single, *Love Goes To Building On Fire* becomes addictive, though in keeping with what's been said before, it bears little resemblance to the material on their recently released album *Talking Heads: '77.*

Despite their critical success, the Talking Heads, like Blondie, have yet to break out of the New York circuit they've been working for almost three years.

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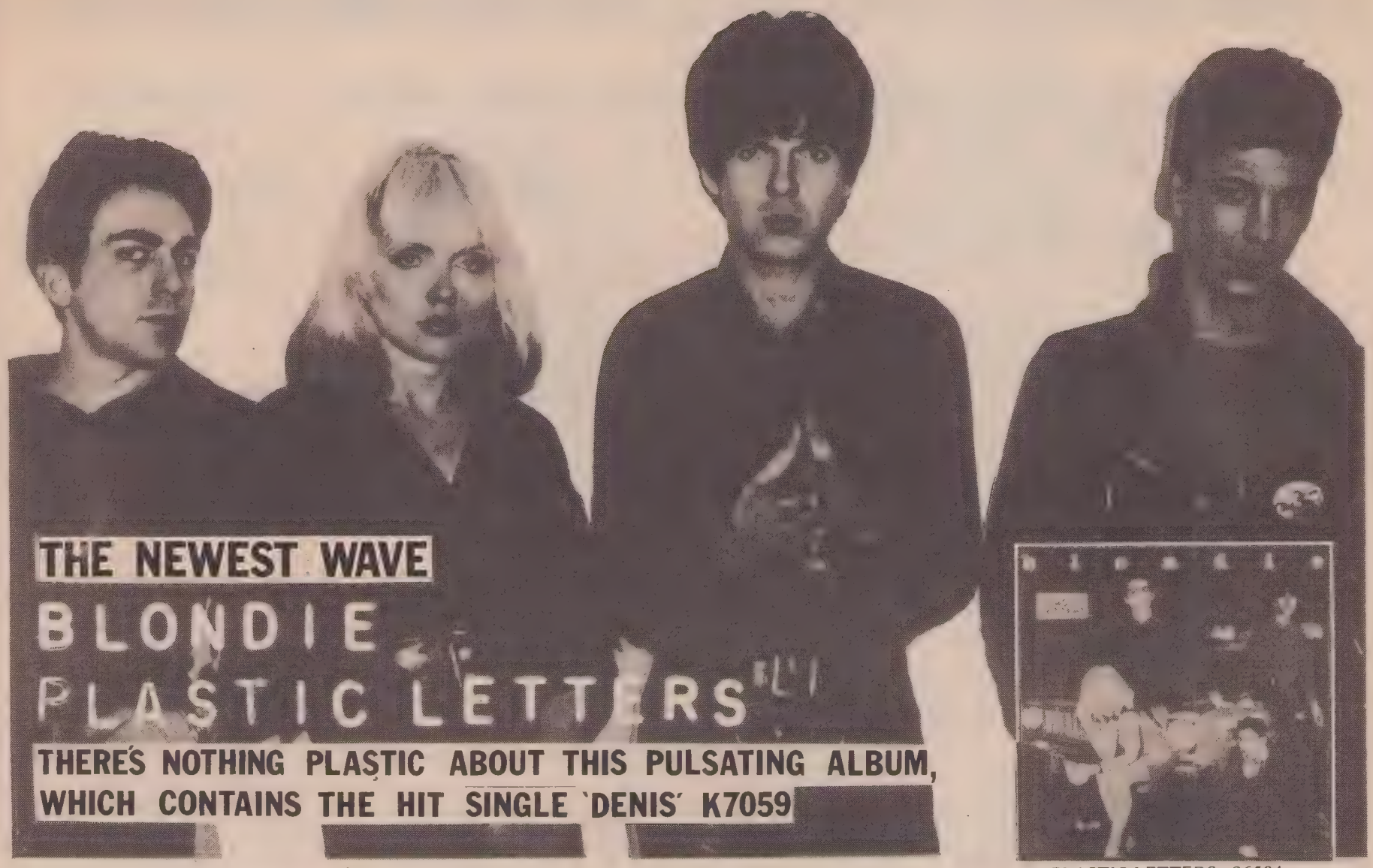
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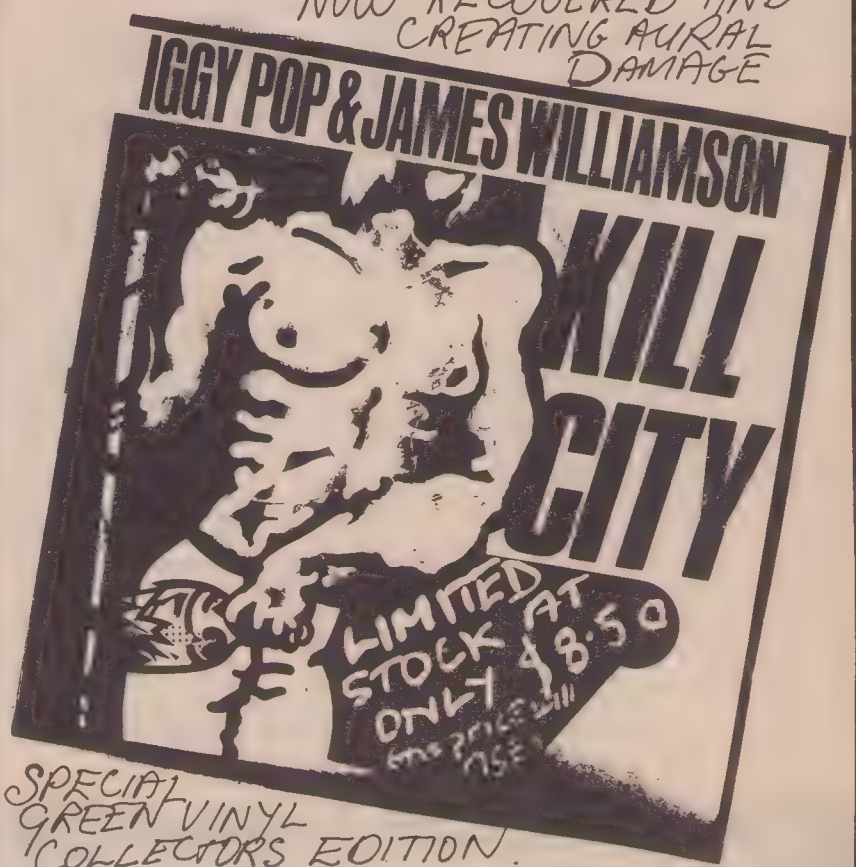

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FROM THE SHANGRI-LAS TO HIP EASY LISTENING FIFTH COLUMNIST IN FOURTEEN EASY MOVES

Phil McNeil decides this 28-year-old "former punk" (?!?) is the best possible New York State Of Mind.

"Billy Joel, a 28-year-old former punk . . ." begins the new CBS biography. Oh yeah? Well, I guess it's better than being a poor man's Elton John, which used to be Joel's most common handle.

Both descriptions are some way from the truth.

Billy Joel is a highly articulate singer and pianist whose latest album and single have both shot high into the U.S. charts. At the age of 14 he played piano on The Shangri-Las' *Leader Of The Pack* (he thinks). At 28, he's gathering momentum to shove a spike of wit and honesty up the recumbent backside of America's hip easy listening scene, and become a Major Artist in the 1980s;

Hey Joe! Make that pastrami sandwiches — Billy's in an Italian street corner mood tonight.

I met Joel back in February '77.

We didn't have long to talk. Joel was just about to depart for the first gig of a tour, in Salt Lake City, yet he was completely unruffled by the sudden arrival of a carload of nosey people, and even continued the interview *en route* for Kennedy Airport.

He was polite, good humoured, and pleased to find someone keen to discuss the motivation for his then current album, *Turnstiles.* Sitting across a low table in his airy living room, while his tour manager fretted over the suitcases, he laughed as I complimented him upon what I saw as the highlight of the live show I'd happened to see in Atlanta the previous summer: his crazy lights operator, a veritable Billy Bunter of a person who positions himself onstage at the opposite end to Joel – with the band strung out between – and bops and bounds like a lunatic throughout the show.

And it's quite some show. Joel heads a band who rock like an avalanche, a show which left me speechless beneath my seat (good booze, too . . .), a sound so clear you think you're hallucinating, a repertoire full of songs to shake you into laughter and leave you nodding maudlin over your cigarette . . .

Quite an act.

Still, so it should be – he's been playing piano for about 20 years now. As a kid he quickly graduated from *learning* Beethoven to faking up his own versions for the teacher, and it's this, he reckons, that first started him writing.

Going into his teens, he turned on to Phil Spector – indeed, Ronnie's Spector's 'comeback' single last year was a version of Joel's immaculate Spector pastiche, *Say Goodbye To Hollywood* – but it was the arrival of The Beatles that precipitated his entry to the world of rock'n'roll. All the kids on the block were forming bands, and Joel could actually play already, so it was a natural.

Then along came a man with a big cigar.

"Y'see, I was young, about fourteen, and somebody asked me did I wanna play on a studio session. And I thought: 'Oh wow, great – I'm gonna play on a record!' This was some little studio out in Long Island – and these guys were making Shangri-La records.

"I didn't know I was supposed to get paid for this. I thought I was being honoured by being allowed to play. The singers didn't sing at the same time – we laid down an instrumental track – and the singers would come in later, so you never really knew what the record was. Then you'd hear the record on the radio and go: 'Hey, that's me!'

"*Leader Of The Pack* I think I played on. I still wanna get the money for those sessions – although I'm not owed it because I wasn't in the union."

What sort of guy was the producer, Shadow Morton?

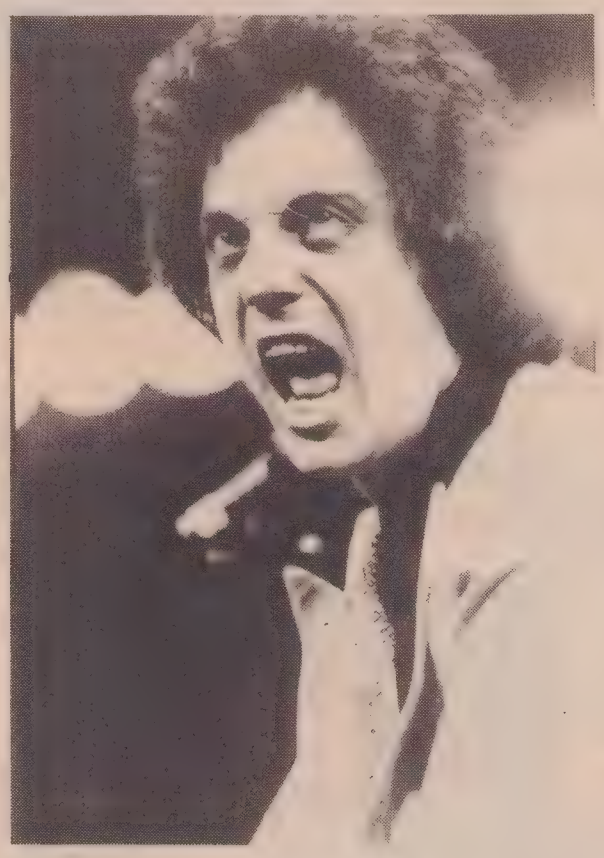
"Aah, he was a nut. Out of the Phil Spector mould: mysterioso kinda guy with a cape and the whole number. He'd lay it down all on two tracks, with strings and guitars and everything at one time . . . It was good experience for me."

After that, Joel moved on into the East Coast blue-eyed soul scene that centred upon The Rascals and Vanilla Fudge – though the band he admired most was The Vagrants, who included Leslie West (later of Mountain). Joel made an album with an outfit called The Hassles.

"It was kinda like a little clique of local bands – and then the Fillmore opened, and it killed the local band thing. Suddenly you could go see Jimi Hendrix, It's A Beautiful Day, for a coupla bucks – so why go to some lousy club out on Long Island when you could go to the Fillmore?

"I was in another band after that called Attila – we were gonna destroy the world with amplification! – but then I got out of groups and was just writing songs. This was about 1969, 1970."

So Joel decided to be a songwriter. But then folks started advising him that if he wanted his songs to be heard he ought to cut a record . . . so he did . . . and if he wanted any attention onstage then he ought to get into *performing* . . . so he did . . .



You wanna see me do a Linda Blair with my eyes? (pix: Michael Putland/LFI).

"And one thing followed another, and it became . . . **BILLY JOEL!!!** It's still funny, because I got into it to be a songwriter. Anyway, I'm not knocking it. Nice way to make a living."

Joel's first success was a ditty called *Piano Man,* his first single for CBS, which went Top Ten in 1973. It was one of those stirringly sentimental waltz time numbers like *Mr Bo Jangles,* and promptly earned him a hard-to-live-down singer-songwriter image. Its inspiration, however, was really strange.

See, back before the CBS deal Joel had cut a solo album called *Cold Spring Harbour* for a small New York company called Family Records. After six months promoting it, Joel became unhappy with the money coming from Family Records, and decided to opt out of the deal – which he did by the simple expedient of vanishing.

He changed his name to Billy Martin, aimed off for Los Angeles, and found himself a job playing piano in some grotty bar.

"This place called the Executive Lounge . . . y'know, stuff like *(sings)* 'You must remember this' . . . whatever people wanted to hear. *Smoke Gets In Your Eyes.* If they wanted you to stop playing, they gave you a tip, you stopped playing.

"I only did it for about six months – but I knew I was gonna get a song out of it . . ."

A good song it is, too – but it wasn't until his third CBS set, *Turnstiles,* that Joel really started honing a sharp edge to his songs. Among other gems, *Turnstiles* contains scathing commentaries upon hip radicalism (*Angry Young Man*) and, most interestingly, nostalgia.

One song, *All You Wanna Do Is Dance,* mocks someone who is "lost in the '70s", while another, the really brilliant, languid *I've Loved These Days,* is disdainfully elegant celebration of the decadence of modern luxury, from one who is kissing his bad habits goodbye.

"Now we take our time, so nonchalant/And spend our days so bon vivant/We drown our doubts in dry champagne/And soothe our souls with fine cocaine/I don't know why I even care/We get so high and get nowhere/We'll have to change our jaded ways/But I've loved these days . . ."

"Yeah, nostalgia . . . I think it's unhealthy. Remember a while ago there was the rock'n'roll craze, and everything was like the '50s – *Happy Days* . . . People were relying on the old days, and I don't remember the old days to be all that great. Yeah, we had fun, but y'know, we live now. All this celebration of the '50s – nobody got *laid* in the '50s."

All You Wanna Do Is Dance he describes as "a combination of anti-disco and anti-nostalgia".

Also on *Turnstiles* there were two songs deliberately boosting New York in the face of the financial crisis attacking the city when the album was conceived: *Say Goodbye To Hollywood* and, more pertinently, *New York State Of Mind* – "a sleazy sort of song, the kind of thing Frank Sinatra might sing" says Joel.

The new album, *The Stranger,* seems even more of a New York celebration. Gone are the previous obsessions with geographical location, replaced by a cool, urban cosmopolitan feel. Gone too are the preoccupations with social stereotypes (no derogatory sense intended), to be replaced by a concentration on personal alienation.

As Robin Katz pointed out in *Time Out,* Joel has homed in on the identity crisis of his generation, as the street kids and students struggle to adjust to adult responsibilities. To support this, his music has moved on into the adept, funky drift of the New York session world, underpinned by the haunting piano motif of the title cut.

A 28-year-old former punk, huh? If they all grow up to make music as honest, as witty and as stylish as Billy Joel's we'll be extremely lucky.

BILLY JOEL

DRAGON

ALL ABOARD THE MYSTERY TRAIN FOR DESTINATIONS UNKNOWN

THE HOTTEST BAND IN THE LAND IS ALSO THE WEIRDEST, AND PROUD OF IT

By: ANTHONY O'GRADY

Dragon came out of New Zealand in 1975. Over there they'd built to being a concert band of the psychedelic sort. Many lyrics of the fairyland fable variety, lots of guitar and keyboard solos.

Basically they got bored and came to Oz to become a more full-on rock band. They did the support spot on a Status Quo tour and got fair to middling response. They put out a single.

Then came a year and a half of unrelieved gloom. Their full stock of equipment was stolen. An unsympathetic new A&R man at the record company sacked them. Their manager said, "Well boys, there's nothing I can do", and walked away. They didn't even have instruments to play, they just sat at home and twitched, suffering the worst withdrawal a musician can go through—the pain of not being able to play pain.

Well, they finally hocked themselves for new equipment and found a new manager. After a time they even found a new record company.

And that came just in time, 'cos the *espirit de corps* of the band was so morose they'd drifted into bad habits to dull the pain of grinding, grinding, grinding away and getting nowhere. Or so it felt to them, even though they had, in fact, built up from minimal reaction to a strong cult following in their slog as second billers around the pubs and clubs of Oz.

But a new recording contract was like finding a street light on a dark road and they prepared their first single, *This Time*, as a hymn of positivity and new life.

And then Neil Storey their drummer, experimenting with heroin, overdosed, and died.

And then their roadies accidently overturned their (uninsured) road van, adding financial catastrophe to the downvibe mire.

Well, they got through all that. And then their second single, *Get That Jive* did well. Then their third, *Sunshine* also zotted up the charts. And their first album went gold. So, by mid-'77 they were building up nicely.

And then they put out *April Sun In Cuba* and it was truly infectious. On sunny days you'd hear people sing it in the streets and it streaked up the charts with the speed of light. It eventually achieved gold status. And that's *real* achievement, for, by the somewhat archaic laws of gold, you have to sell 55,000 singles or 20,000 albums, even though album sales are vaster than singles sales by nearly two to one.

The second album *Running Free* went ritual gold, then climbed to platinum.

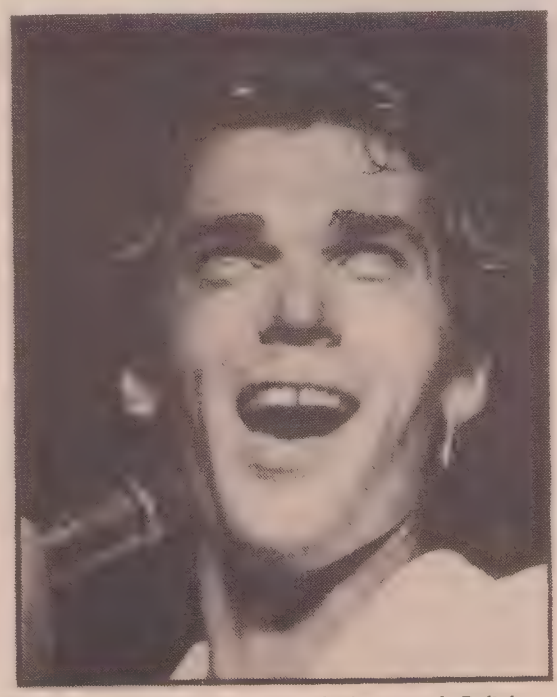
Oh yes, somewhere in there they were also signed to Portrait Records for America. This was considered A Very Big Deal, Portrait being a small but exclusive U.S. company that otherwise had only Proven Big Names such as Heart and Joan Baez on its roster.

Finally they got Special Guest Star billing with Boz Scaggs, released a second single *Shooting Star* from *Running Free* and have just started their first ever national concert tour, playing the halls instead of the clubs and pubs.

It's a simple enough story, but you mustn't think Dragon themselves see it in such simplistic terms as hardship and triumph. The more you dig into Dragon the more complex and circuitous it all gets. Their albums, which first appear to be adept collections of various song styles, turn out to be astonishing mixtures of rampant romanticism and unbridled, hardened cynicism. Their shows, which at first glance, are frolicsome rock 'n' roll dementia turn out to be quirky manifestations of a deeper craziness that just might be severe schizophrenia. Welcome my friends to the show that never ends . . .

Pix: Kathleen O'Brien.

Bro' Todd Hunter broods over a bass run. "Lemme see, if I put the little finger on the eighth fret and the middle finger behind the ninth . . ."



Bro' Marc Hunter gleams with Demented Delight at finding an innocent audience to vent theories of entertainment upon.

Guitarist Robert Taylor caught in very act of squirming his body in R. Taylor Rubber Knee style while squirting audience with guitar slasheroo.

WEIRDNESS AT THE MARQUEE

Backstage at the Boz Scaggs Sydney concert it's like how it must have been when Presley used to rent whole fairgrounds for just himself and the Memphis Mafia.

The thirty or so people scattered through the two marquee tents, loomed over by the white cheesecloth draped gargantuan stage and hemmed in by the brooding shapes of giant semi-trailers seem a little like left over, bit actors on a deserted set for *The Greatest Show On Earth.*

The tinge of unreality is reinforced by the vast emptiness of backstage and the fact that, not twenty yards away, 39,000 punters are shifting into automatic groovathon and going Bananas for Boz.

About half an hour earlier Dragon had earned themselves a standing ovation for a short (28 minutes precisely) set that packed in their every well known hit, plus a leavening of album trax including . . .

"DOES ANYONE OUT THERE LOATHE' HATE' DETEST AND DESPISE DISCO?" screamed Marc Hunter mid-way through the set. And the concert audience with the usual blurred mass perception of all large crowds screamed *"YEAH YEAH!"*—just as if Marc had asked the usual *"Areyerhavingagoodtimeoutthere?" "Well here's our anti-disco song—'Some Strange Dream',"* shouted Marc. And honestly, only a few seemed to realise the cheekiness of the scam he'd just pulled. Fancy asking a Boz Scaggs crowd, many of whom *discovered* the man in discos to publicly approve of anti-disco. Definitely a risky gambit. Particularly when you consider quite a few fans have discovered *Dragon* while doing the funky hoedown in a disco. But then, as we'll soon find out, Marc Hunter and the rest of Dragon *don't* think very much of the mass crowd mentality. They knew most of the mob would shout back a ritual *'YEAH'*. And if they'd thrown broken glass instead, they probably wouldn't have cared too much about that either.

Still the sheer, mammoth *event-ness* of the staging, the huge crowd even the exclusivity of backstage, eventually makes an impression. Sitting cosily in the foam armchairs in the relaxation marquee, Marc breaks off an animated conversation with Dragon manager Sebastian Chase. *"Don't you believe", he says in all seriousness, "we could be as big . . . bigger . . . than this in four years time?"*

"I do", he says.

"Do you think you're the hottest band in the country?"

"No. what a very pushy question, why do you ask that?"

"Just thought I'd bring it up, 'cos everytime I hear a radio advert for Dragon appearing at some club they always say *'The Hottest Band In The Country'* ".

"Well, that's what *they* say . . . (pause) . . . we draw a lot of people, but I wouldn't say . . . "

"Well how about the degeneracy angle. At your gigs I keep hearing girls saying how "wonderfully degenerate" you all are. And Andrea Jones used the phrase 'perfect picture of rock 'n' roll degeneracy' on you in a Melbourne review" . . .

"Ah, but what *passes* as degeneracy and what *is* degeneracy are not always the same. And it takes a different flavour again after a series of hit records, when people turn up expecting The Concert Experience. Maybe they expect too much and build up a false picture of us. Because I dunno what we are. But I know we're not the typical concert band with flash bombs and dry ice . . . we play as we feel, with no adornments."

"A lot of times the *'we play as we feel'* line is used by bands to rationalise their unevenness. As in *'We were great last night, but tonight there was a downvibe 'cos the drummer's girlfriend ran off with a roadie . . . '* "

"Ha! No, it's not an excuse for unevenness, 'cos the band has improved so much, our worst nights now are better than our best nights *two years ago."*

"Yes, but there's still a big difference even now between the band's best and worst nights. It's not down to the maybe slick stage where a bad night for the band is imperceptible to the audience."

"No. Our bad nights even now are so bad, they're unbearable . . . for us anyway . . . it's a real turgid, sleazy atmosphere. But it varies from night to night. Maybe it shouldn't, but there's no reason for it not to, unless you hack it down to one thing that makes you popular and play it over and over again. But then you're starting to pander. And when you start pandering you're fucked. Ostensibly people come to watch you do something and *you* entertain *them.* It's a basic dominator/dominatee situation. But if you pander then you've lost it. You've reversed the master/slave situation.

"But is the entertainment scene ultimately geared towards anything else?"

"I dunno. And I don't really give a fuck. It doesn't matter, we're working, so who cares."

That's a verbatum account from a section of an interview with Marc Hunter a few days before the Scaggs concert. It shows the young artiste has good control over his mental footwork (for instance, pointing out there could be difference between what *appears* to be degeneracy and what *is* degeneracy). It also points out he and the band have very definite ideas on how rock 'n' roll works. Not for them the Fee Waybill of The Tubes philosophy *"I will do anything, kiss bare arses, to be popular. Then when I'm big I'll* **shit on everyone".** "It's very important for the band to entertain itself as well as an audience" says Hunter.

The bottom line is, the band are in it to do what *they* want to do. Not what any audience expects them to do. It seems the only audience they *really* want is one prepared to work as hard as the band at creating rock 'n' roll craziness .

"We were a small minority taste in New Zealand," says Marc. "We're a larger minority taste here. In America . . . who knows? Maybe we'll have an even larger minority. But we're still a minority taste. We'll never be a huge sort of thing."

And then two days later he turns around and says *"In four years time . . . "*

Skin beater Kerry Jacobsen shows the innocent face behind the merciless, stick-wielding hands.

YOU DO WANNA BE STARS, DONCHA BOYS?

There's one for sure you can say about Dragon, they're a peripetaic outfit.

"Between one thing and another you mean?" says Marc, "I dunno. There's so much pressure on us at the moment to conform to some sort of homogenised thing so we can be marketed across the board. And it's nice to kick against that every now and then . . . just to be a little crazy."

That must be of some concern to the people who, as they say, are there to sell the product, like the wonderful folks at your record company, even your understanding and sympathetic management.

"Oh that doesn't matter," says Marc dreamily. "What matters is the band now has four amazing new songs. I think Paul (Hewson, keyboard player) is the best songwriter in the country at the moment, he's got so much fuckin' class."

Mention of Paul Hewson provides a good enough jumping off point to stress that Dragon is, in fact, a co-operative of individuals. Marc Hunter may be the front man cum outstanding anti-star of the outfit on stage, but the band creates its music and makes decisions as a group of equals. Marc's older bro Todd on bass, guitarist Robert Taylor, Hewson and drummer Kerry Jacobsen all have individual preferences and opinions. Not only that, they'll follow them, no matter what the rest of the band does. Within Dragon there's *a lot* of leeway before anyone is considered to have stepped out of line.

All of which leads to a certain looseness, often sloppiness, within the band.

"We played a few dates with Skyhooks recently," says Marc, "and their roadcrew was amazed at our attitude. When they go on the road they're like a military operation *. . . all zip! zip! timetables! schedules!* everyone knows where everyone else is. And they were amazed at how we sort of slopped around. "I once tried to explain to someone our sloppiness was our strength, because it couldn't work any other way for us.

"It's probably not as effective as if we were totally organised but then, we couldn't exist under that."

Rock star confesses he's untogether. Well, there's no shame in *that.* Most of us are. But very few make such a point of demonstrating looseness as Dragon. At times their producer Peter Dawkins has been said to have jumped up and down in the studio shouting if the group didn't do it *his* way *right now,* he'd cancel their recording contract.

And then there's the story of how the Big Wheel from Portrait records came over to meet his latest product, and ended up blasting 'em and snarling at them to get it together or give up.

"Yeah", says Marc, "he gave us a lecture. We had a lunch date with him and when we were a couple of hours late, he wasn't too impressed. He thought we were a bit slack. "He said he didn't travel 12,000 miles, or whatever, to be held up by a bunch of jerks." he laughs uproariously.

"I guess that was pretty fair actually. We'd got a bit pissed the night before, that's what happened. So he canned us a bit and told us to get it together, etc. etc."

At one stage an April/May U.S. tour for Dragon was mooted, but that plan seems to have taken on the same sort of looseness that operates within the band.

So much so that Peter Dawkins, a few weeks back, just looked vague when it was mentioned and said the band wouldn't go "until they were ready. It might take a few months, it mightn't be till next year."

In fact the initial euphoria of being signed to an "Exclusive" American label seems to have faded, for the band anyway.

"We're in the position of not knowing exactly what's happening man", says Hunter bitterly. "The information we get is tilted to serve certain purposes . . . if you know what I mean."

I don't exactly but that's as far as Marc will go. There's obviously a background hassle in there somewhere but Marc is staying stumm.

Keyboardist Paul Hewson models correct costume for Cafe au Lait, Continental piano-playing style. (pic Kathleen O'Brien).

SO NOW YOU'RE BIG STARS . . .

As you noted at the start of this piece, Dragon are undertaking their first *true* national tour. Oh sure, they've played every rock club and pub in Oz round and round for the past two and a half years, but *this time* they'll do halls. Bigger gigs and you won't have to be over 18 to get in.

But Dragon just laugh when you ask if they've reached the Sherbet stage of being *only* a concert band.

"The scene has shifted from that concert thing to the Richard Clapton/Kevin Borich/Stars thing", asserts Marc. "All those bands that are working the pubs and the clubs. I dunno whether it corresponds to the pub scene in England two years ago where the hottest bands in the land were at your local pub, or whether it'll build up from there to a concert thing again."

Well, RAM has always advocated the benefits of small venues, both as the best deal for liggers and as the most viable atmosphere for a band to generate a genuine audience relationship.

"Oh yes," says Marc, "we have done some *amazing* gigs in pubs and small venues. Such power you wouldn't believe.

"A big gig", he says, "gets an effect because there are so many people, but the number of things you can do with a large number of people are diminished. With one person you can have a one to one relationship . . . with two people the closeness diminishes slightly and it grows from there . . . 'til in the end it's just a formulised thing where people come *expecting* to see something very specific. It's a drag, but there's nothing you can do about it."

So how does the prospect of playing a national tour of halls affect the band?

"Oh, that's ok . . . they'll be able to dance, and there'll be more space for 'em to see the band close up.

Are you planning to use special effects or any stage technology beyond concert lighting.

"No. The atmosphere will depend on the band."

OK BOYS, WHAT DO YOU REALLY WANT?

Marc Hunter is a 6'4" giant with classical, dark-haired, good looks. He's lithe and he moves either at a relaxed slinky lope or threshes like an amok windmill—a tangle of long legs and arms sliding and crashing around stage.

For the past one and half years he's been a fairly constant drop in RAM visitor. In leaner times, I suspected he was supplementing a meagre diet with large dosages of RAM coffee, a dangerous nutritional experiment, if ever there was one.

The thing is, he hasn't very much changed in basic mental attitude all that time. As the records have climbed the charts he's become more outward, less shy. But his attitudes to success and failure don't seem to have budged. He, just like the rest of Dragon, isn't much affected by what the normal laws of rock showbiz hype and marketing say they should do. Basically, as they themselves say, they don't give a fuck about *that.* Or maybe that's too strong. Basically they don't care so much they'll readily adapt a businesslike strategy instead of following their own idiosyncratic visions. In this they share a certain amount of philosophical ground with confirmed New Wave bands.

On the other hand, they *want* to be popular, they *like* having records in the charts, they *like* headlining shows. And as Marc intimated backstage at Boz, the appeal of large-scale popularity *isn't* all *that* resistible.

In some ways, the group is like Sherbet-for-Jaded-Adults in that both groups share a penchant for covering a wide field of musical forms, with ever shifting boundaries.

The major differences are a more forthright, uncandied and often brooding lyrical writing ability within Dragon, and their attitude towards success. Sherbet make no secret of their ambition and willingness to make No. I. Dragon aren't nearly so pushily unified in that direction.

In fact, what we've seen so far is a fairly fragmented picture of a group that seem to be a mixture of contradictions, individualities and fuck-that bravado.

Is there anything that ties this mess together?

Yes there is, and it's the closest thing Dragon have to a cohesive philosophy. It's called Edgework.

Edgework is where a band runs the tightrope between what an audience *expects* and the deviations beyond which they won't follow. Edgework is the bridge between taking an audience on the band's trip and leaving them behind completely.

"The whole strength of our band is edgework," insists Marc. "Will we fall over or not, that's the question. We're really into edgework in most of the things we do."

As I've noticed over the years through several Dragon eras, the good nights are heady, wonderful, raucous affairs. The bad nights can be more razor-blades-and-slashed-wrists than Leonard Cohen ever dreamed of.

"Oh yes," agrees Marc, "the audience really like it or are turned off, completely repulsed. . . or so frankly mystified they can't get into it at all. It's very interesting in a continuous sort of way."

Isn't there sometimes a temptation to push an audience into actual *dislike.* There is, for instance, this Dragon number *Dance* where Hunter goes into a rave that can last up to twenty minutes. And if he feels the audience aren't contributing their share to the gig, he's likely to give 'em a vicious spurt of verbal acid right between the eyes . . .

"Oh no . . . sometimes people have to be told they *could be* enjoying themselves more, why do they come and see us if they're not interested in joining in? But the basic aim is to entertain audiences. The band really likes gigging and we want to come back. It's more of a . . . let's see what we can get happening tonight . . . *anything* . . . just so it doesn't get boring. It's no use to a band to repeat themselves . . . no use at all."

Don't you ever think to yourselves—we've had a few hit records, let's really get it together and make half a million over the next year?

Marc laughs. "Good heavens . . . *no!*" He does a quick mental calculation then says. "Do you realise that's a band split of about $60,000 each. So you're not talking about *real* wealth which only starts at about a million dollars per person. Anything between that and the breadline is just fucking middle-class, psuedo-rich crap and you may as well not have the hassle . . . really it is. You can't live rich on $60,000, it just isn't enough. So a lot less is just as enjoyable really.

"There's really so much bullshit about money in rock 'n' roll", he says. "It's just a myth. And once you even start earning thousands of dollars per gig, it's not a liberation, it's a bond. It all goes on equipment and updating instruments and trucks etc.

He stretches lazily and smiles luxuriously.

"I do it for a giggle more than anything else."

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THE SUN MACHINE IS COMING DOWN

OK, you've read the hype on "Close Encounters of a Third Kind." Now read some weird tales about UFO theories, conspiracies of silence and Big Brother Terrorism tactics.

By: Andrew McMillan.

"I don't care where they're coming from, as long as they're here. As long as they're coming to help us before we reach the point of future shock."
UFO Observer.

In 1946 waves of UFO sightings were reported throughout Europe.

In 1948 an unidentified flying object crashed into the mesas of North West Mexico. A security net was thrown over the area and U.S.A.F. officials moved in to investigate. Inside the cabin of the one hundred foot silvery disc scientists found the charred bodies of sixteen men.

In 1955 a bright green object emitting an orange coloured flame was seen passing over Katoomba. Hours later, reports filtered through of a mysterious object that had crashed into the sea near the entrance to Sydney Harbour.

In the late sixties, a flying saucer scraped the top off a tall industrial chimney in Port Kembla. The authorities blamed the damage on lightning. On a fine night?

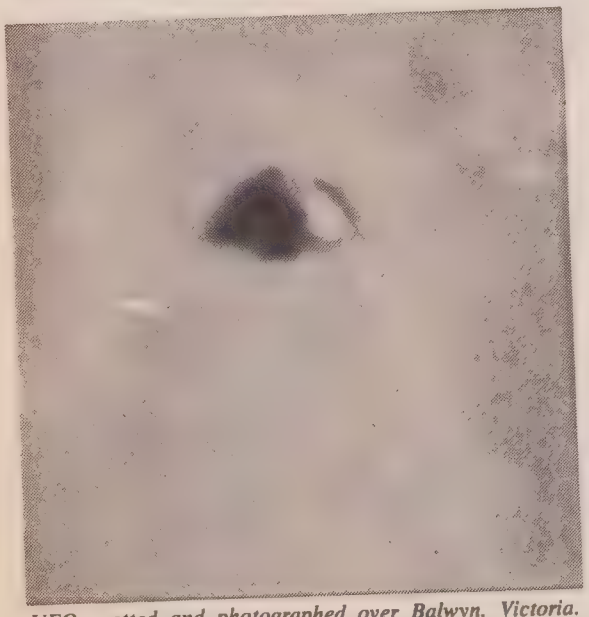
In 1976 an air traffic controller at the Amberley RAAF base in Southern Queensland picked up a mysterious aircraft on the radar screen. When it failed to acknowledge transmissions, three F111's were sent up in pursuit. They chased the craft but it outdistanced them.

Every ten minutes, a UFO sighting is reported somewhere on earth.

No doubt about it, these are strange times. Since the late forties UFOs have become regular news fodder. But in his book *Chariots Of The Gods,* Eric Von Daniken claims that strange flying machines were a part of life *two thousand years ago.*

So what's it all about? No-one seems to know. Or, if they do, they ain't saying'.

Try and correlate the evidence in support of the existence of UFOs and you immediately run into trouble. For a start, there are over two hundred accepted classifications of unidentified flying objects. That's two hundred different types of craft from . . .?

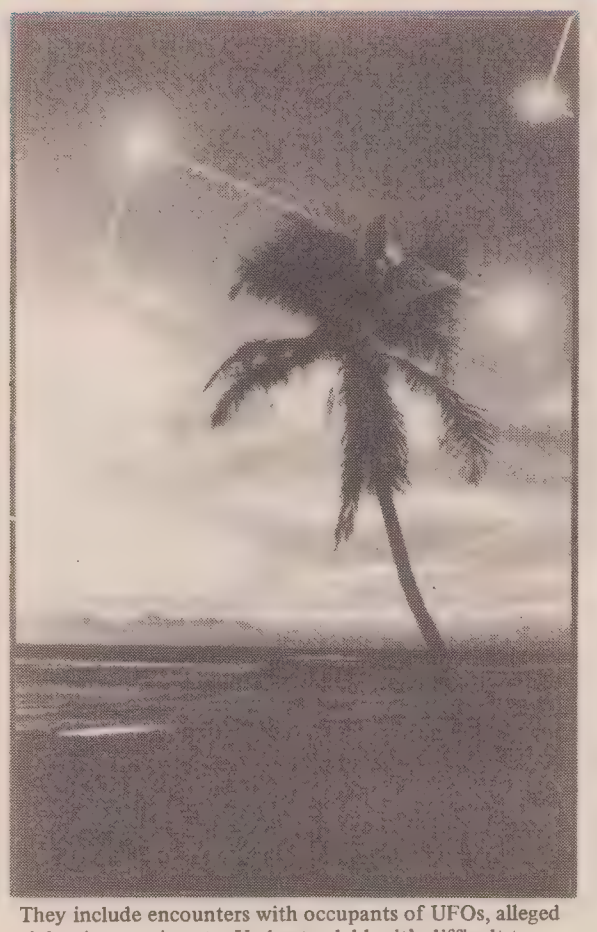


UFO spotted and photographed over Balwyn, Victoria. Now at last we know why Balwyn's Calling.

Fred Phillips of the UFO Research Society says *only one in every ten* sightings is reported. And most of these, are Close Encounters Of A First Kind – a detailed sighting of an unidentified flying object that doesn't affect the environment or the witness.

A Close Encounter Of The Second Kind is a situation where the UFO affects the environment or the witness. Burnt rings in the ground at UFO landing sights, animals running wild or disappearing in the vicinity of a UFO sighting, machinery cutting out, people suffering burns, temporary paralysis, nausea or conjunctivitis are cited as Close Encounters of the Second Kind.

Close Encounters Of The Third Kind are the rare ones.



They include encounters with occupants of UFOs, alleged abduction, testing etc. Understandably, it's difficult to correlate these reports. There are, we're told, over thirty separate classifications of UFO occupants ranging from short slim humanoid creatures three feet in height to creatures with bald, egg-shaped heads, hairy creatures, ones in silver jump suits, ones in blue uniforms, ones with big ears and talons on their fore-arms etc, etc, etc.

These creatures have been attributed with five different behaviour patterns – friendly, hostile, afraid, bold, not interested. Reports of hostility from these creatures usually seem to be inspired by panic from sighters. In 1965, a UFO landed in Kelly, Kentucky. The locals freaked and started shooting at the creatures with shot guns. When hit, the creatures, described as being three feet high with bald oblong heads, would float or fall over and scurry for cover. So whaddya expect? White flags or somethin'?

For as long as we are ill-informed, incidents like the above will occur. It's a mystery, so it's frightening.

Lynsee Wardell saw her UFO at one in the morning after a party. Relaxing on her back porch, she watched a bright yellow light hovering over the valley at Bilgola, one of Sydney's northern beaches. For fifteen minutes, Lynsee and her father, a retired Army captain, watched the object through binoculars. The yellow light was so strong, says Ms Wardell, no shape was definable. Then the light "zoomed away at a phenomenal speed, changing colour to red as it did so. It was a siren-red blur. We thought it might have been tail lights but then it did a swift right angle turn that no conventional aircraft would be capable of. We followed it north past Avalon Headland until it disappeared out of range. I didn't feel threatened or afraid, just totally fascinated. They're here to help us." *Aaaaah,* it's like a scenario from the movies. Are they coming to invade or help? Little green men in cigar shaped aircraft, buzzing in from outer space. For many, *that's* a myth. There is y'see, this belief that UFOs aren't from outer space at all.

For instance, there's the *UFOs from Antarctica* theory which suggests the possibility of a fourth super-power based under the vast tracts of snow-free land of Antarctica.

Some other theories as to the origins of UFOs incorporate the Hollow Earth Theory – i.e. there's another continent/universe within our planet and the UFOs rise from there.

Other people suggest UFOs are based under the sea, which provides a natural cooling system for their nuclear reactors. They cite a high number of UFO sightings over water as proof. But then, three fifths of the earth's surface is covered by water so merely by the law of percentages . . .

Some people believe there's a UFO base *under* the Blue Mountains near Sydney and recount the high number of accurate sightings there as suggestive proof.

Then there's the story the Nazis developed flying saucers towards the end of World War II, flying them out of the Sudetenland Mountains for destinations unknown.

Still more interesting is the idea that world governments *aren't* releasing info about UFOs 'cos they've developed their own. The Russians claim to have flown a nuclear powered bomber in 1957. Eleven years earlier, the U.S. Government had opened the Nuclear Energy For Propulsion Of Aircraft organisation.

Some observers believe America has already developed its own top secret nuclear powered flying saucers. This, they say, is why governments refuse to release information regarding UFO sightings, landings and crash sites. UFOs are really a Government plot.

Other reasons for suppressing info go like this: if the authorities (whoever the hell they are) release reports about their investigations, then we (the plebs) will fear an invasion from outer space and go wild in the streets. At least that's what the Central Intelligence Agency thought in the fifties. Today, it's said the suppression of info is to do with the high doses of radiation UFOs allegedly give off. (In the late fifties, an American Air Force order A.F.R.-200-2 directed Air Force personnel to equip themselves with geiger counters when investigating UFO landing sites).

This suppression of information looks like holding true until someone either steals the files or leaks the contents.

After all, why hasn't President Carter declassified American files on UFOs as his campaign speil promised? And don't pretend it's 'cos there *weren't* any files. The C.I.A. file mentality still remains.

Richard Tambling, author of *Flying Saucers – Where Do They Come From,* insists you *don't* tell the RAAF about UFO sightings. "Your information," he says, "no matter how good it is, will soon be in the hands of the C.I.A. and you could be held to ridicule."

This C.I.A. connection seems to be a popular theory among ufologists. In 1953, the CIA's Office of Scientific Intelligence convened a meeting of top scientists and C.I.A. personnel. For five days, they watched spectacular film of UFOs shot by the Navy and discussed the possibility of UFOs. It was at this conference the C.I.A. decided UFOs were a threat to national security. No, they weren't bombing cities and they didn't seem to be Russian, but they were a threat. After all, the Russians didn't seem scared or interested in UFOs so something sinister *must* be happening. Along that line of um, *thought,* the C.I.A. decided unless reports of UFO sightings were covered up or sighters discredited, the American populace would be susceptible "to mass hysteria and greater vulnerability to possible enemy psychological warfare." The C.I.A. was worried the "myth of UFOs" could lead to an "inappropriate" response from the public. The conference report concluded, "a broad education programme must be undertaken." "It should have two major aims – training and debunking," That way, thought Big Brother, interest in UFOs would disintegrate. It was suggested that conglomerates such as Walt Disney Inc. should make animated cartoons putting shit on UFOs as a ridiculous figment of the imagination.

The C.I.A. set out on a task of manipulating the "myth", a programme that bordered on psychiatric fascism.

At that meeting in 1953, the C.I.A. also decided to place people under surveillance whose scientific or cultural views differed from those of the Agency. UFO investigation groups were placed under surveillance "because of their possible great influence on the mass thinking."

A night shot of a UFO over Perth (taken by L. Benedek).

Today, the C.I.A. is still hellbent on crushing the "myth" in the interests of security. But, in 1966 a Gallup Poll found that over five million Americans had seen UFOs. In 1973, another Gallup Poll showed that fifteen million people had seen UFOs. Faced with defeat, the C.I.A. is, allegedly, getting heavier. UFO people tell of their mail disappearing, strange telephone calls and men in black following them. Some, whose cars have blown up and whose homes have burnt to the ground, put the blame on their local Big Brother.

For some, 1984 is getting close. For others, salvation is a phosphorescent jumbo jet. For most though, the "myth" still remains.

This story contains just a little bit of the essential Graham Parker spirit

AND THERE'S A VERY TRAUMATIC REASON WHY

Telephone Man: Anthony O'Grady

Taping telephone calls is actually illegal. ASIO aren't supposed to do it to private citizens, the police aren't supposed to do it to suspected criminals. On the other hand, for deadline-pressed rock writers, the old suction cup against the telephone trick is often just the thing. The only thing is, it don't work for international calls. Something to do with interference from the satellite.

On the other hand, a tape recorder pressed up against the mouthpiece of an extension phone captures the full story.

And so it came to pass that when a more than usually alert RAM secretary spotted a tape machine sitting next to an off-the-hook telephone, she promptly did the usually sensible thing, replaced the receiver and turned off the tape.

Meanwhile, on the other extension, Graham Parker was happily chatting about this and that, expounding his theories of life and music, and a good time was being had by all with no presentiment of the yawning abyss of silence being retained on tape in the other room.

Let me tell you right now, G.P. is a most entertaining man to hear on any subject, from something as trivial as the weather, to something as serious as the future of rock'n'roll. (You *do* believe that's a *serious* subject, don't you?)

It's not only the content of what he says, it's his hoarse, droll method of delivering opinions with split-second pauses before punchlines, and a deft way of turning conversational cliches upside down so they cook up fresh, with a piquant flavour.

"Well, how was I to know?" sniffled a belligerantly unrepentant RAM secretary.

"You stupid bitch you've just lost us one of the great raves of all time," someone shouted. I must confess it was me.

On the other hand, being a conscientious little ligger, most of the questions had been written down beforehand, and notes had been scribbled as G.P. talked.

Here then is the Graham Parker Trans-Atlantic Talk-In. Minus, unfortunately, most of the man's own essential verbal flavour. Still, into every life a little rain must fall . . .

The talk naturally enough starts with *Stick To Me,* the latest G.P. elpee. It's his third (not including the semi-legendary and extremely rare *Live At Marble Arch* "official" bootleg). Whereas the songs and playing are no less excellent than on his previous efforts, *Stick To Me,* has a sharpness of production and a playing edge that makes it the most satisfying Parker studio effort yet. And it contains his first single with a chance of being a hit in Oz – *New York Shuffle.* It was produced by multi-talented Nick Lowe, who has his own album *Jesus Of Cool,* coming out soon (*free plug*).

"Yeah," says G.P. "Nick's an old mate. He's been like, one of the gang for a long time . . . longer than me actually. (*Nick used to play bass with Brinsley Schwarz, the group. Brinsley Schwarz the guitarist/keyboard player is now in The Rumour, G.P.'s backing band*). Nick did the first album with us when we were just starting out.

"Hey, did you ever hear the full story about *Stick To Me?*"

Er, don't think so.

"Well, we spent a month in the studio and had a great time. It came together so well, we were overjoyed. We knew this was *the* album. Then we came to do the mix and found the tape machines in the studio hadn't been lined up properly . . . so the drums sounded like they had phasing on 'em, and stuff like that. That was a *right-royal* piss-off.

"Then, because of the release dates, we had to record it in a week, so we got Nick in 'cos he's very fast, probably the fastest producer in England.

"A lot of the album is first-takes . . . definitely a lot of first-take vocals. It worked out 'cos we'd already done it and knew we could do, so it was just a matter of going in and doing it again . . . real fast."

So *Stick To Me* was essentially a "live" studio album?

"Yeah, that's the way it turned out."

But then a lot of people have said the full flavour of G.P. only comes through as a live experience.

"Yeah, a lot of people think that . . . that we come over better live than on record. But I dunno . . . what we're striving for anyway is to reach a high peak of playing . . . and we want to make a *great* album as opposed to a very good album, we're always striving towards that. Like when it was finally finished we thought *Stick To Me* was the breakthrough for us.

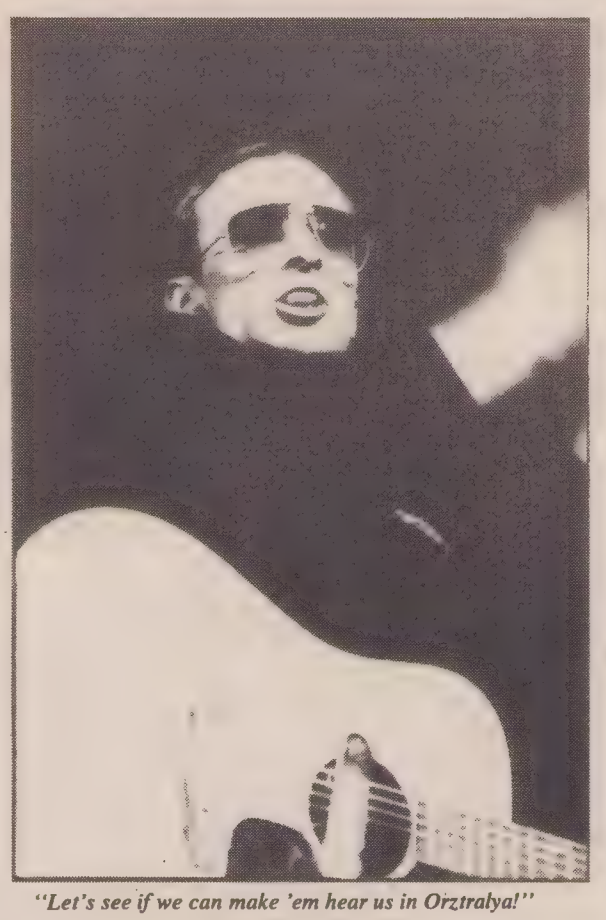
"But since we've been listening to it, and writing new songs, we think the next one is gonna be it. The record you're working on is always the most important."

I really liked the high controlled energy and passionate vocal delivery on *Thunder And Rain* from *Stick To Me.*

"Did yer? That was my favourite too. We decided to put out *New York Shuffle* as the single 'cos it was totally up and fast, know wot I mean?"

In conversation GP emerges as a straight down the middle guy, he expresses himself forthrightly, doesn't hand out bullshit and won't take any in return.

Er, Graham, you've been tagged as rock's Great White Hope . . .



"Let's see if we can make 'em hear us in Orztralya!"

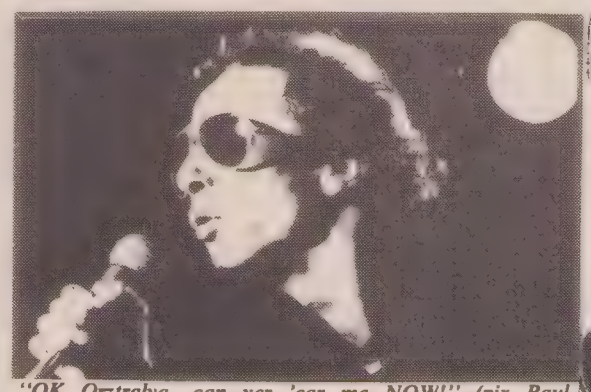
"Ah . . . I don't think about stuff like that and I don't believe it . . . not *any* of it," he says fiercely. "If they write bad things about me, I always think they're a bunch of wankers. But I don't believe 'em when they go overboard on praise either."

Much of the immediate appeal of G.P.'s songs is in the way they sound familiar-yet-different. You hear lots of familiar rhythm and blues hooklines for instance. But delivered with individuality. Does he ever sit down and think *'that's a good hookline I'll twist it around a little bit and . . .'*

"No . . . but there's a lot of that about ain't there. Lots of bland songs with known hooklines. But if I did that, maybe I'd have more hit records.

"But then nothing's really original is it? Like Lennon/McCartney and The Stones really blew me out when I first heard them. I thought they were really new. But then I found the sources of their inspiration . . . I tend to absorb everything around me at the time. I hear a song on radio that sinks in, and *that* becomes part of an influence."

The number we called to reach G.P. was *not* at his London Record Company or Management offices. It was in Deepcut, Surrey, way outside the metropolis, deep in English rural suburbia. Having a bit of a holiday eh, Graham?



"OK Orztralya, can yer 'ear me NOW!" (pix Paul Cox/LFI).

"I should be in America right now," he retorts bitterly. "We should be on a three month tour over there. But m'manager Dave Robinson went over and it wasn't ready. Mercury just weren't pulling the finger out or getting excited, so it was no use . . . they weren't matching our excitement level, or our work level.

"Just about every record we've sold in America," he says bitterly "has been sold via our live gigs. And a lot of times we'd get people excited at the concert and next day they'd go out and try to buy a record, but stores wouldn't have 'em . . . nobody from the record company came around to make sure there were records if people were wanting 'em. So we're a bit disappointed with Mercury in America."

The story is happier in Australia though. Phonogram (which distributes Mercury here) have been pushing G.P. for the past year with a high pitch of vim and vigour. If, as is currently looking likely, Parker turns up for an Oz October tour, he can confidently expect to be outrageously pampered from flight arrival to flight departure.

THE G.P. LEGENDS

There are a few legends associated with Graham Parker. One is that he decided on a hard working rock career after a particularly high-dosage of LSD – a trip so powerful it's been said to produce occasional acid flashbacks even today.

"Oh yeah, well I used to take a lot of acid, *until* I sunk a bad trip that took me out of it for months . . . maybe even a year. That's how out of it I was, I can't even remember.

"It really inspired me to get off my arse and do something. I had to get it together to keep from sliding back.

"Sometimes I still feel slightly weird from it these days. But I'm not *damaged* or anything like that."

And you'd better believe it.

The other G.P. legend is that a bout of glandular fever changed his voice, turning from a pipsqueak into the full throated passionate delivery it now is.

"Yeah, that's true. It was at the Windsor Free Festival years ago. I was working in a hamburger joint at the time, doing a bit of singing. But the voice coming out *wasn't* mine. It was weak. I never could listen back to it.

"I knew my real voice was in there somewhere, but I couldn't get it out. Anyway, the hamburger store owner said let's go sell some hamburgers at the Free Festival. So we went down and I camped out, sleeping in the car.

"I thought I got a cold from that but it turned out to be glandular fever. The voice changed after that and suddenly I was singing like I *felt* I sounded like.

"And the voice has changed from then. On *Howling Wind* (the first G.P. album) it was very gruff and it's moved to being more melodic on *Stick To Me.* But the fever started it all."

Some people would say *that* story is an example of the workings of kharma.

"Oh sure," says GP only half-mock sarcastically, "maybe we're all part of this wonderful, mystical cosmos, trying to find our own individual fates somewhere along the rough path of life."

But, Graham, you've been referred to as part of the New Wave. And the New Wave doesn't believe in hippie bullshit like that.

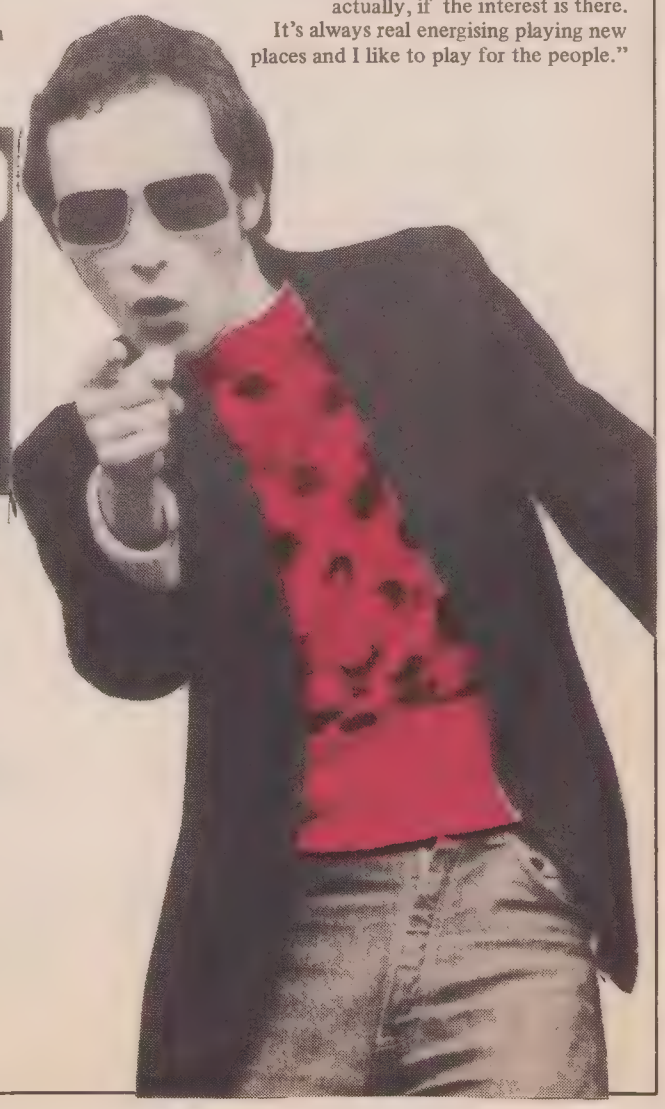
"Nah, I've never been part of a movement or part of the New Wave, or anything like that. I mean, I wouldn't call myself part of the mainstream either.

"But I agree with some things the New Wave say. One of my motivations was that all the music turned soft and mushy . . . and then there was all that hippie cosmos thing that was so sappy. The New Wave was right to come along and say no, that that's not the way you do it.

"But *all* new music turns soft and mushy," he finishes philosophically. "That's what's happening in England right now. There's still a lot of great music around, but mostly it's down to a formula now . . ."

How about coming to Australia?

"Yeah? Thanks for inviting me. I'd like to actually, if the interest is there. It's always real energising playing new places and I like to play for the people."



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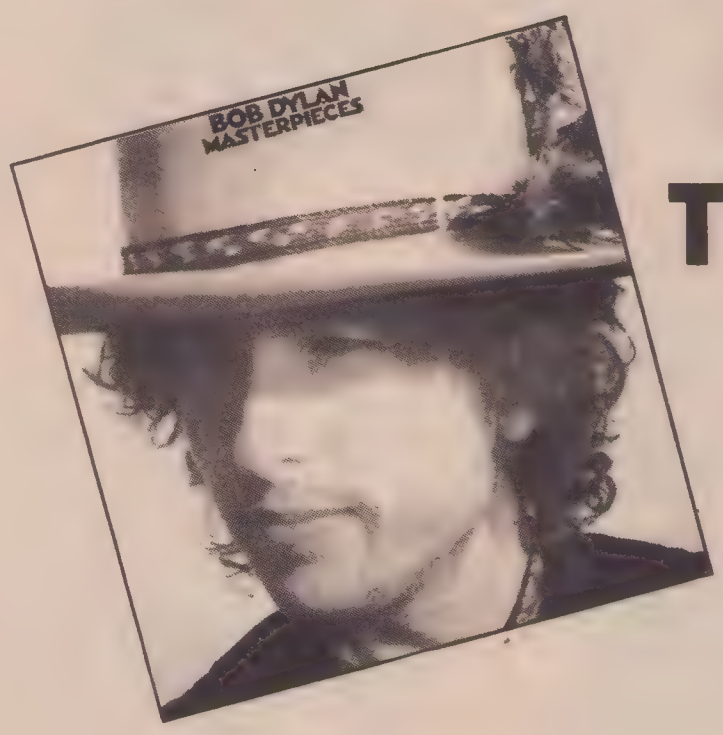

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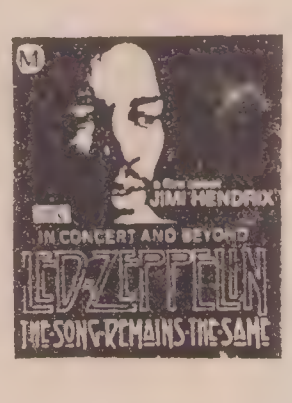

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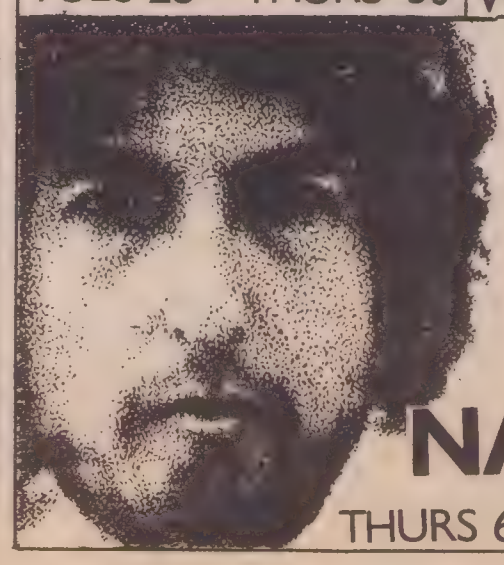

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THE ONCE AND FUTURE KING

Johnny O'Keefe

Twenty-five years in Showbiz, a near fatal car accident, bankruptcy, a crack at America and four nervous breakdowns later, he's still top of the pile. His comebacks would make Lazarus blush with modesty.

By: Anthony O'Grady.

To put it brutally, Johnny O'Keefe could be a man in the throes of catatonic collapse. The hands are soft, white, shaking. The flesh on the face is quivering. The eyes are darting but glazed.

Oh sure, he's in control. But he looks as if it's causing a vast effort and his words, soft spoken and polite as they are, come out disconnected and weary.

"Uh . . . yes . . . the show tonight was OK . . . I always feel a little nervous when I know I'm being judged critically from the audience (*he means my presence there, I guess*). And it was our first show for a few months so . . ."

Is this humble quivering man the same person who's just left 'em screaming for more in the huge Cronulla Leagues Club?

Well, yes it is.

And on stage he was magnificent. White Wing, his young, sharply alert backing band have a penchant for neo funk/jazz when they play their solo spot. Clever enough, but more facile than fascinating. Then Johnny comes on and *zaaaaaaap* White Wing immediately fade into the background and become the identikit well-honed backing band. Nothing complex in Johnny O'Keefe's music. It's all sharply played, well delivered basic rock and you can safely bet the family fortune just about every Big Hit JO'K ever had is tucked in there.

Actually the show is a marvel of pacing. For Johnny just doesn't sing songs – he presents *The Johnny O'Keefe Legend.* He interspaces songs with stories of his tough times – the car accidents and the financial crisis that left him owing the Taxation Department several fortunes in 1965. And the battles he's had with radio stations around Australia to get airplay for himself and other Australian artists.

And he talks about the good times and the victories. How he pieced back a shattered career on a Jack Benny tour in 1964. How he barnstormed around Australia playing fairs and carnivals as a sideshow attraction and earned twice the money the Taxation Department demanded.

How *It's Too Late* made No. 1 in New Orleans in 1960. How sometimes he was able to prove to radio stations they were wrong. That people did want to buy his records.

The show is not just paced, it's constructed just like a champion golf course or race speedway. With all the twists and curves melded into each other so the whole is a varied, integrated unity that builds to and includes two encores so cleverly crafted they demand themselves.

When you're in a Johnny O'Keefe audience you know you're being manipulated towards certain responses at certain times, but what the hell you can't resist going along, the ride is so good.

He starts off with *One Of Those Nights,* a recent single that didn't do all that great for him. Then straight into *It's Too Late* which steadies the pace. A smooth acceleration into *Right Now.* There's a regathering of breath with *Over The Mountain,* then it's a fast gallop down the straight with *Rock'n'Roll Will Stand, Sing Sing Sing, So Tough* and *Be Bop A Loo La.* And then, THE BIG ONE – *Shout.*

Then he's walking off stage, which is akin to someone taking away the party keg at 10.00 pm, just when things are warming up.

So naturally he comes back for a heartfelt *I'm Counting On You.* Raises temperatures with *Move Baby Move,* then lays down a monologue about his crazy, yo-yo life as a raison d'etre for *Be Careful Of The Stones That You Throw.*

This is the danger point of the show for O'Keefe. *Stones* is one of the original, turgid, maudlin country standards with a lot of internal monologue concerning "bad girls in the town" and "neighbours so unkind", even a runaway car that almost runs down the neighbour's kid until the bad girl jumps under the wheels and rescues the sprog.

Johnny O'Keefe as The Wild One in the fifties — check the leopard skin lapels and the short socks. Did he wow 'em? You betcha!

But he scrapes through somehow and then he's into *She's My Baby* with half the auditorium clapping along and the other half bouncing as if their seats were trampolines.

Of course he has to come back again. He delivers his biggest ballad *She Wears My Ring.* Shakes it down with *C'mon And Take My Hand.*

Then he gives a little speech about how this is his 25th year in showbiz and how it was his birthday just last week, and darned if the crowd don't leap at the chance and suddenly about 600 people are roaring *"Happy Birthday Dear Johnny . . . Happy Birthday To You . . . HIP HIP, HOORAY!!!"*

And then with emotion running high O'Keefe belts out *Just A Closer Walk With Thee* and, if that wasn't enough, he wrings out the last drop with a two chorus reprise of *Shout* and then he really leaves the stage.

And the crowd is just whipped bananas. Nothing less.

He uses a real lot of echo on his voice and he mostly just stands at the microphone just tapping his foot in time with the beat. There's every reason in the world why he should be completely past it and over the hill, simply because.

But his voice still has a palpable something – the range is small but he sings with his whole being, he combines the archetypal rock qualities of vulnerability, and brash toughness. And although, truthfully, sometimes you shudder at his chances of making the next long note in *So Tough* he always pulls through, sweating and shouting so profusely it's impossible not to get all involved and emotional. Barring weddings and funerals, a Johnny O'Keefe show is about the most emotion-producing thing happening in public throughout Australia.

Night after night you'll see forty year old couples trying to boogaloo while remaining staidly seated. Thirty five year olds whooping it up in the aisles. Sweaty twenty year olds splashing perspiring faces into jugs of beer in an attempt to cool down. Sixteen and fourteen year olds rushing the stage for autographs . . .

Wait a minute . . . 16 and 14 year olds at a Leagues Club to see Johnny O'Keefe, *and* rushing the stage. Why, just late last year somebody connected with the National Rock Awards miffed he was glad JO'K *hadn't* won the Rock Hero Award.

"It should have gone to someone contemporary," he said. "Johnny O'Keefe is definitely *pre* the present rock scene."

The funny thing is, I've met nine year olds who prefer O'Keefe to Leif Garrett. Can you get any more contemporary than that? After all, Leif Garrett, by all the rules of teenybopper hysteria, has a good three months remaining as the Prettiest Face In Town.

It just demonstrates O'Keefe's generation gapless recyclability. In 1964, even before I'd been fabbed by the Beatles my father took me to see Jack Benny, 'cos he had his own teev show that made me laugh. First act was this little white nervous man sweating all over his dinner jacket. He started off with a few ballads and really, even from an impressionable point of view, he wasn't very good. Then suddenly he threw politeness away and started stamping his feet and running around stage, working himself into a red-faced frenzy.

And *then* he communicated. He got a standing ovation. For bravery if nothing else. It was my very first demonstration of what wonders a rock beat and unlimited enthusiasm could do. Even my father clapped. And he's a jazz band man.

THE EARLY YEARS

Johnny O'Keefe started singing around local halls as soon as he'd finished his National Army Service in the mid-fifties. Pretty soon he was supporting many of the Big Overseas Artists flown into the country, in bulk, by promoter Lee Gordon. It was nothing unusual for Lee Gordon to stack his bill with up to 24 big name American rock'n'rollers. Top billing got maybe a half hour spot. Lower down people would do just one or two songs.

The first show Johnny O'Keefe did was with Little Richard and Gene Vincent and the Australian fans back then were just like they are now, most of them booed the local act.

But O'Keefe stood up and snarled back *"You knooooooooow you love me".* And then they cheered.

On that tour, according to Bob Rogers, who back then was the hot dee-jay for rock, Little Richard went quite bananas and by the time he reached Melbourne he'd made a decision for God. He went on stage and read the Bible for twenty minutes then flew back to America to join a revivalist sect.

O'Keefe thought that was pretty weird but Johnny was young and his mind was steel, he didn't know nuttin' about strain. He was still five years away from his first of four mental breakdowns.

Johnny O'Keefe's first real glory glory hallelujah days were 1958-1959. In 1958 he was getting equal reaction to stars like Roy Orbison and Crash Craddock and Jerry Lee Lewis.

"Yeah, he got 'em moving," admits another veteran of the early days. " But let me tell you what his father – his manager – used to do. Every time there was show he'd sell tickets to O'Keefe fans. But he wouldn't just buy and sell a section, he was too smart for that. He'd scatter the fans in two and fours right around the whole stadium.

"Back in those days there was quite an organised resistance to Johnny. He had this sort of anti-fan club who'd turn up to boo and throw things at him. But they always made the mistake of sitting together.

"So when O'Keefe came on you'd get people all around the stadium cheering and stamping their feet and this one bloc booing and throwing things. The other people would get excited by how crazy the fans were going and they'd start throwing things at the anti-fan club. And pretty soon there'd be a full-scale riot, most of it *for* Johnny O'Keefe, and the overseas act would look out and say *"I've gotta follow* that!?!"

Then in 1959 O'Keefe came right out and blew a whole series of US headliners off the stage into the bleachers. True they weren't the legendary stars like Gene Vincent, Johnny Cash or Jerry Lee Lewis. But Fabian and Ricky Nelson just didn't rate trying to follow Johnny.

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Johnny O'Keefe showing the strain. "He's a wreck" snarls an aquaintance. "He's so wiped out by all those years of drama he has to be held together by his staff." But see pic below before jumping to conclusions.

"Fabian," says Johnny today, "just couldn't sing. But he was big in America and that was enough in those days. Sometimes it seems as if it still is.

"Mind you," he continues, "I don't regard myself as much of a singer either. But *I am* an entertainer."

And he is. The second time I saw Johnny O'Keefe strut his stuff was at a swish charity do on Sydney's plush Upper North Shore.

At least it was swish until you came to where O'Keefe was performing. He was bunged into a little tent and I guess he was working cheap since '65 was the year he was declared bankrupt by the Taxation vultures.

So here he was in a small tent at a charity do on the Upper North Shore and he walked around the crowd of about nine kids, politely introduced himself and shook hands.

Then he got up on a rinky stage and went crazy for a full hour. By the time he finished the tent was overflowing onto the lawn five rows deep. He'd sucked up a crowd like a vacuum cleaner.

Johnny O'Keefe's history has always incorporated drama of the most volatile brand. A near fatal car accident in 1960 couldn't stop him recording his own teev show *Six O'Clock Rock*. Not only that, he turned it into *a triumph*, by asking the folks at home to keep watching 'cos he was starting plastic surgery and he wanted everyone, including himself, to see how it worked, week by week.

Before and after pix for pimple cream treatments were as popular. Ratings soared as a whole nation tuned in to see if a plastic surgeon could re-create Johnny's baby face by instalments. He could.

AMERICA

In 1959 after convincingly creating an instant legend in Oz, O'Keefe became the first rock'n'roll Glory Roader. He flew off to conquer America.

Like all the mid-sixties Oz bands who flew off to England only to starve, O'Keefe didn't exactly take overseas by storm. But he gave it a good shake.

He'd only been in the USA a few hours when he met a vice-president from Liberty Records, played him an acetate of *Shout*, and promptly scored a five year contract. The Liberty men, convinced they had an untamed genius on their hands, prepared a massive onslaught that failed completely.

So Johnny took over himself. Sold most of his assets in Australia, mounted his own campaign in the USA, promoted himself as The Boomerang Kid, hustled like a steam train, made No. 3 in New York with *She's My Baby* and No. 1 in New Orleans with *It's Too Late*.

Russell Morris, now living in America, remembers speaking with senior record company executives who still remember Johnny. And how.

"One guy is still mad at him for trying to hustle his wife back in '59," chortles Russell. "Then there were the boomerang throwing contests in Central Park, New York. You got five dollars if you could beat Johnny O'Keefe, The Boomerang Kid. The only thing was, Johnny would sometimes turn up more bent than a boomerang – he was one of the very few people in rock'n'roll back then getting wiped out on pot.

"The record company supported him for one contest and hundreds of people turned up. Johnny staggered down really whacked and beat about two of 'em. Liberty Records just couldn't believe it."

"Gee," says Johnny today, innocently, "I remember the boomerang throwing contests, but I don't remember that one.

"Anyway there were a lot of people smoking pot in rock'n'roll before I came along."

ROCK'N'ROLL WILL STAND

This writer hasn't seen Johnny O'Keefe perform very often, and the times have been spaced out over thirteen years. Yet he's provided me with a handful of truly memorable rock nights and you couldn't ask more from any rock 'n'roller.

The *most* memorable O'Keefe night was at Paddington Town Hall in 1973. As per usual there was no small amount of drama, even pathos involved. JO'K had a severe nervous breakdown in 1972 and was fighting back once again.

The Paddington Town Hall show was a rock'n'roll revival show.

There was Ray Columbus and The Invadors. There was Ray Hoff and The Off Beats.

And Johnny O'Keefe – Top Of The Bill, 'cos he was a legend.

Here he is — J.O'K., King of the Clubs — Champagne Living All The Way. And he's right on top of it all . . . (All J.O'K pix from Philip Morris).

And the bikies and the old grease-haired bodgies and the suburban couples reliving memories, and thousand of kids involved in the process of *creating* memories, poured out of the woodwork and into Paddington. It was a hot summer's night, the kind of sultry, on-the-edge hotness just made for letting it all pour out into honest, grinding, primeval rock'n'roll.

And Johnny O'Keefe, I swear, had to be helped to the stage and if the microphone stand hadn't been there he looked as if he'd have fallen over. And he slurred the words and mumbled the introductions. He didn't move an inch all night, just jerked his right leg in time to the beat.

But he delivered. When he swung into *Shout* the walls rumbled with more audience participation than Billy Thorpe ever achieved at Sunbury with *Oop-oop-pah-do*. Big bearded Hells Angels crawled through the crowd and licked Johnny's boots. I know they did, 'cos I was swept up against the side of the stage, thrilling at the sheer craziness of it, and wondering vaguely if I'd get crushed to death.

"Do you know he sat in the dressing room and smoked joint after joint for an *hour and a half solid* before the show," remembers an organiser of that concert.

"It was sort of another big comeback for him and he was scared. Half an hour before he had to go on, I never thought he'd be able to stand up. Then he has to be helped on stage, but he gets up there and HE'S BLOODY FANTASTIC!!!

"We thought, this guy is a gold mine. The walls were bulging with the people. So we took him to other cities, got big crowds, smoked a lot of dope and lost money. The crowds were great. The shows were fantastic. But these crazy bikers would wreck the halls afterwards and we were all too stoned to do anything about it . . ."

CLUB-LAND

"The clubs," says Michael Chugg, manager of Kevin Borich, Richard Clapton and Stars, "are having real trouble filling their halls. The people don't want to go see all those song and dance teams that have been around for fifteen years. They're just starting to realise the only way to fill the halls is to put on rock and roll. Suddenly they get full houses. There's only about three or four acts outside the rock acts who can fill the clubs . . . Johnny O'Keefe, Col Joye, Kamahl . . ."

"When we go to the clubs," says Peter Rix, manager of Marcia Hines and Trevor White, "we take our own sound system, our own band, our own lights. It's the only way to put on a consistent professional show."

"Mind you," he continues, "it's nothing new. Johnny O'Keefe has been doing it for years. He was the first to take over the clubs and say just give me the room and the admission money and you keep the bar proceeds. And he always presents *his* show, *his* way."

As rock'n'roll gets older, the logical place for it to move is into the plush adult League and RSL clubs. No more grotty suburban dances. Only thing is, as the adult rockers – everyone from Borich to Marcia Hines – move into clubland for a bite of the cherry, they've found 43-year-old, Johnny O'Keefe has had the scene covered for years.

So this is Johnny O'Keefe, the man whose comebacks would make Lazarus blush with modesty. Car accidents and financial crises and four mental breakdowns and he's still got it under control. King of the plush clubs and he could still play any top rock venue and draw a mammoth crowd. The survivor. The Legend. The King.

And here he is, playing the vague but friendly host as he treats me to a lush lunch at Eliza's, the swishest of swish eating houses in super-expensive Double Bay.

"I used to smoke marijuana before going on stage," he says absent mindedly, "but I don't do that any more, it makes me too . . . uh, vague."

And then suddenly his eyes stop wandering aimlessly and come alive with rapier intelligence and 200% swift awareness when I tell him I used to study Philosophy at University.

"Do you want to hear my philosophy?" he asks. "Actually it's a paraphrase from Ralph Waldo Emerson: 'All life is an experiment. The more experimentation the fuller the life you'll lead. Sometimes you'll try something and get knocked to the ground. That's when you've got to get up and try again. Because it'll never hurt as much again, even when you get knocked down again'." Then he goes vague again.

At first you're startled by the volte-face. It's like trying to keep up with someone who is doing the mental equivalent of either galloping or crawling, nothing in-between.

But then you find yourself being drawn to him almost protectively, because you can feel him making a 100% effort to relate to you and, as a matter of course, you automatically move from uncommitted observation to responding in kind.

And best of all, you don't leave thinking the Legend is Great but the Human is Damaged. After a while you realise Johnny O'Keefe has it all under control, in his own roundabout, often seemingly aimless way.

AFTERMATH

Johnny O'Keefe lives in style. He owns a big two-storey house in ultra-expensive Edgecliff. He has an organisation of secretaries, a manager, a photographer, several publicity personnel, working full-time or most of the time. He is driven everywhere in big air-conditioned limousines. When he tours he stays only in four-star presidential suites and apart from music he has branched out into a multiplicity of businesses including fashion boutiques.

He is the benign king at the top of the pile and the luxury befits him, he rubs against it absent-mindedly, twisting the links in a thick, 18-carat gold bracelet, signing restaurant bills without even glancing at the total.

"He's a wreck," snarls an acquaintance. "My god, the man can hardly talk straight. He's so wiped out by all those years of drama he has to be held together by his staff."

But people closer to the O'Keefe organisation say this is untrue. Johnny may be a little vague sometimes but anyone who tries to put something over him generally gets cut to pieces. "He's in a private world most of the time," explains another acquaintance. "But that doesn't mean he doesn't know what's happening. He can handle anything around him. The only thing he ever seems unsure of sometimes is how to handle himself."

"You know," says Johnny O'Keefe suddenly very serious when I ask him about the health strain of touring. "That doesn't bother me at all. I always travel first class and stay in the best hotels.

"No, the thing I worry about is mental health. I have to be very careful. That's the thing that scares me most of all, losing control of my mind. It's a terrible thing when that happens . . . just terrible. So I go to a psychologist every week and talk over anything that's worrying me. I have to do that because I know how worries and mental strain can build up inside me and I finally had to learn how to cope with them before they built up.

"I have found," he says, "once I learnt how to control my own fears nothing could ever scare me."

And I am filled with boundless admiration for him when he says this. For it takes a brave man to lay his own fears and limitations in front of a questioner he hardly knows.

In 1984, it's a safe bet, there'll be nine year old kids who'll like Johnny O'Keefe a whole lot better than the current 15 year old pop sensation.

ABBIE HOFFMAN is on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted Men list. In the late sixties he co-founded the Yippie Movement. The Yippies were revolutionary hippies who devised radical and often pointedly humourous ways of demonstrating against The System. For instance, they threw a bundle of cash from the visitors' gallery in the New York Stock Exchange and watched gleefully as stockbrokers lost their cool and scrambled over each other for the cash.

The Yippies also perfected the art of the 4.00 pm demonstration – prime time for maximum exposure on the 6.00 pm TV news bulletin.

Hoffman was a prime member of the Chicago Thirteen – the revolutionaries accused of inspiring and directing riots against the Vietnam War at the Democrats' 1968 Presidential Convention. The Thirteen were found guilty as charged, then the verdict was overturned by the Supreme Court. Subsequently Hoffman found himself on the Ten Most Wanted List for drug offences. He promptly disappeared, although his writings occasionally surface in selected publications around America. "Border Crossing" is reprinted from Crawdaddy.

Apart from the instant notoriety of being written by THE Abbie Hoffman it's also one of the best guides to Mexico we've come across, and we urge you save it if you're thinking even vaguely about a trip to Tortilla Land someday.

BORDER CROSSING FOR AN OUTLAW

How ABBIE HOFFMAN smuggled himself, a colour TV, six car stereos, a refrigerator, some tables and an aluminium sink into Mexico.
And got back out.

Let's start at the border. Car crossings are easiest and besides, the best way to see Mexico is by car. Don't bring a big, shiny American car. If the dirt and potholes don't get it, the mirror-bandits will pick it clean, the sludge from the gas pumps will eat out its insides and, in the end, you'll regret the hassle. Think compact, and if there's a choice think Volkswagen. Mexico has a huge Volks assembly plant in Puebla and every mechanic knows how to fix them.

One word of caution: Mexican Volkses don't have fuel injection, so don't be surprised when mechanics start hunting for the carburettor. You're better off with an older model. The ideal vehicle would be a five-year-old Volkswagen van with some dents already in it.

Before you begin, invest some greenbacks. I say invest because you can pack the van with valuable equipment that you can easily unload for three or four times your investment price, and if you're hustling you can cover nearly all your expenses. Say you customize the interior – bed, refrigerator, tables, sink. You can load it up or just do essentials. Say you put in $800 worth of interior stuff. When you're ready to leave, you can easily sell it for $1,500 to a Mexican with an empty van who, if he *could* get anything locally, would pay double that. Throw on the best tyres you can purchase. These too can be traded for double the price when you leave, plus you get the buyer's old tyres.

At the border when you fill out the car papers, write **"VAN"** (not "Camper") in the blank. Under Mexican customs law you're allowed to bring in a portable TV, AM/FM tape deck, car stereo (CB is actually illegal; the theft problem makes CB a bad idea anyway) and anything else for personal use. Camping equipment, scuba gear and photography equipment can be sold quickly or bartered for room and board. None of these have to (or should) be new. I sold a used 19" colour portable TV that I paid $90 for, for $400. (And I was doing the guy a favour since he was saving four or five hundred dollars.) Colour TVs are the easiest item to sell off, but car stereos are also in hot demand.

There's another item which not only is really profitable but great at establishing rapport. Music tapes cost about $10 in Mexico and good ones are hard to come by. Before we head down, we get 90-minute cheapo cassettes, head for the best stereo system in sight and spend a week making recordings. Disco music is the most popular. Hard rock also has a lot of fans. You can sell a tape with music for $5, or trade it for a night's lodging or a good meal. I've traded 20 tapes for a kilo of grass. It wasn't *prima mota* but for seven bucks a key, I'm not complaining.

Don't be shy about loading up with a few TVs or car stereos. I once figured I could get 100 car stereo units tucked away in a van without anything looking suspicious. It's important to remember that if you have trouble at the border, you can return to the U.S., drive a hundred miles and cross at another point. And remember, every border guard and every cop in Mexico is corrupt. Actually "corrupt" isn't the right term since the *mordidas* (bites) someone in uniform can pull down are considered part of his salary.

Say you had a few thousand dollars worth of questionable items and the guard gave you a hassle. A fair bribe would be 100 pesos or one of the items, like a car stereo. Giving too much is worse than too little. They think they have a sucker and will try for the whole load. Dress clean. Arrive at lunch time (2 to 4pm) and have two "clean" suitcases easy to reach. Be confident.

The reason I'm putting a lot of emphasis on this is to get you into Mexico with the proper attitude. Trading, haggling over prices, offering the correct bribe and so on are intricate parts of the Mexican social fabric. It is not impolite, exploitative or dangerous – to the contrary, acting otherwise is considered anti-social.

I've read all the same scare stories as everyone else, but my own experience is that with the right attitude and the correct bribe you can walk away from the tightest jam. Most drug busts of Americans are made because someone cut into someone else's business, or the people busted had no respect for local sensitivities, which frown on flagrant behaviour in public. A man and a woman travelling together should say that they're married; you shouldn't smoke dope in public or bathe in the nude.

Even if you fly down for a week or two, bring a portable TV, a stereo and tapes; just make sure they're not in the cartons. You can sell all this stuff or trade it as you go along. If you're in the city for any length of time, you can put an ad in the paper. Without too much worry and bother you can easily unload the stuff.

Where to go depends on your time limits and how much you want to see. The west coast is more beautiful to look at, but the east coast has better swimming and diving; after all, it's the Caribbean. The south is the most beautiful, has more isolated Indian villages, mushrooms and rough winding roads. The north has great deserts, ranch lands, Don Juan and peyote. Mexico City has a superb museum, great international restaurants, the best Diego Rivera (in the lobby of the Prado Hotel on Benito Juarez), the Zona Rosa and, if you're an afficionado, the best bullfighters (but not the best bulls) in all the world. Guadalajara has (after Nairobi, Kenya) the best climate in the world, as well as terrific language schools.

You'd be wise to sign up for Spanish courses as soon as you arrive. Being a student makes for a more rewarding experience than simply seeing the country as a tourist. Beware, though, of bourgeois, racist teachers who do nothing but try and butter up Americans.

If you want to see ruins, the best are in Palenque, about 300 miles southeast of Vera Cruz. Palenque is semi-jungle, which means lots of rain, which means mushrooms. Even though they grow in cowshit, they are the caviar of hallucinogens. If you've had them dried or frozen, chances are you probably had some low-yield LSD or cow tranquilizer sprayed on supermarket mushrooms. The real thing just doesn't ship well, and should be picked and eaten fresh. Get to the cowshit early in the morning as dopers are out in droves. Of course there's more rain in the rainy season (July to September), but in Chaiapas and Oaxaca it manages to rain just about year-round and the mushrooms sprout like crazy. If you go to Palenque, drive an extra hour or two down the dirt road to the waterfalls called Agua Azul.

Vera Cruz, by the way, is a truly exciting seaport. It has the best fiesta in Mexico at Carnival (Mardi Gras), about the second week in February. It's wild and very crowded. It also has the best seafood in the country. Which, given its proximity to the Atlantic, the Pacific and the Gulf of Mexico, might make it the best seafood in the world. The best I've tasted was at the Boca del Rio about six miles outside of Vera Cruz heading East. Pompano is highly recommended and you can get a full dinner here for three bucks. *Huachinango a la Vera Cruzana* is Red Schnapper in a semi-spicy red sauce. Finger-lickin' good!

Mexican cooking is more varied than you might think. It's the oldest cuisine in the world, older, although in all honesty not better, than Chinese. The problem about finding good Mexican cooking is that there is no real Mexican school; the art is handed down and the U.S. has a strong negative influence. For example, tortillas are considered to be just for poor people, so if you want to put on social airs you eat white bread *(pan Bimbo)*. Too bad, since tortillos are more nutritious, great teeth cleaners and a cultural mainstay.

Probably the best food centre is in Puebla. *Chiles en Nogado,* which is a mild chile stuffed with meats and pineapple, then covered with a white walnut sauce and red pomegranate seeds, is probably the most complicated (28 ingredients) and most prized of Mexican dishes, and it's best in Puebla during the fall. *Huitlacoches* (pronounced what-la-coach-ays) is a black mushroom that grows on corn and is considered Mexico's finest. Look for La Fonda de Santa Clara which, for the price – or any price – may be the best restaurant in the country. Also you'll have to try

mole poblano con pollo or chicken in chocolate sauce, which is infinitely better than it sounds.

I've never really had great Mexican food in Mexico City but I've eaten the best tacos there – La Caminera on Lerma just behind the U.S. Embassy makes them. I'll take that back about Mexico City – you'll have to try goat *(cabrito)*, a super Mexican delicacy. The Charlston on calle Queretero get the most stars. La Hacienda de las Morales is a real swanko joint with flaming torches, tuxedoed doormen and fountains where they have bull's balls in a nice green sauce (they are politely referred to as Rocky Mountain Oysters) and a strong contender for the best *flan* in all Mexico. The San Angel Inn also has excellent Mexican cuisine in the grand style. These last two places cost a pretty peso and are real snobby.

Most Americans think they're playing it safe if they only eat at a Sanborn's, a Denny's or the Hilton Hotel. In general this is really an ass-backward way of looking at things. The best places are those where the average Mexican businessmen eat their afternoon meal. Restaurants must serve them good food at good prices or they'd go out of business. A tourist restaurant knows the tourist won't be back for a few years, the cook's more prone to spit in the soup, and anyway, who the hell goes to Mexico to eat hamburgers and apple pie?

Don't drink tap water but don't get paranoid about it. Drink what healthy Mexicans drink. Talk of "different stomachs" is racist hooey. Speaking of drinking, you'll want to try their beer, which is better than ours. Bohemia with 6% alcohol is the best of the brews. Tequila is, along with grass, tomatoes and about 200 other original indigenous foods, truly heaven sent. Tequila is a type of mescal that comes from the town of Tequila just outside Guadalajara. There are two types, white and *anajo* (gold), which is slightly sweeter. The absolute best tequila in the world is *Hierradura* (horseshoe) gold and it's just that – liquid gold. It's not yet available in the U.S., except in border towns, but will soon be. The late Bing Crosby got soused on it, liked it better than Minute Maid, and bought the U.S. rights.

Another drink made from that fantastic *maguey* (magay) plant is called Pulque. It tastes like it's made from equal parts piss and Gatorade, and it takes about eight litres to get you buzzing, but the atmosphere in a pulqueria is the closest thing to an Old West saloon. No women allowed here. There are many unusual soft drinks, of which *manzana* (apple) and a knockout pineapple cider called *tepache* are the best.

Mazatlan, once a refuge for pirates, now identifies with fishing so strongly, it has a monument to The Eternal Fisherman on the main plaza.

For hotels in Mexico City, try the Maria Christina or the slightly cheaper Maria Angelo just down the block on Rio Lerma. Downtown there's Hotel Isabella on Isabella La Catolica and Uruguay, and, if you want a real social scene with loads of young Americans, the Genova in the Zona Rosa is a fair deal. If you're vanning it and just got into town, head for the rich section (believe me, in Mexico you'll know rich from poor), find a nice tree-lined street and park for the night. No one will bother you and it's safe; many streets even have security guards.

In the Northwest you'd be wise to take the train ride from Chihuahua to Los Moches (or the other way). It's a contender for best train ride in the world. You'll see waterfalls, mountains and villages where the Indians still ride with rifles and *bandarillos* slung across their shoulders. It passes the Barranca de Cobre (Copper Canyon) which they say is deeper than the Grand Canyon. There's only one track so the trains go on alternate days; the 15-hour trip out boasts some of the most incredible scenery you'll ever see. In Chihuahua, you can talk to Pancho Villa's widow, who runs a small museum featuring the car in which her husband was assassinated. You can put your fingers in the bullet holes. In Zihuatanejo there was a shooting, and the only thing people would comment on was how big the bullet holes were. Even kids made a point of fingering the holes in the still warm corpses). Los Moches has the biggest and best shrimp in Mexico and is just a few miles north of the opium fields.

For sunny surf it depends again on how lost you want to get. Puerto Angel below Acapulco is gorgeous; Zihuatanejo further up the coast is getting pretty well-known. It's got character, though, and great clams. San Blas further up is nice, as is Barra de Navidad, which is not that popular but superb. On the east coast you can camp right on the beach all along the Yucatan. As you drive south from Cancun, turn off any of the dirt roads to the left. Isla de las Mujeres is cheaper than the island of Cozumel. If you dive, try and get a guide to take you to the "Cave of the Sleeping Sharks." The reefs south of Cozumel have brilliant black coral.

Merida is Maya Central – lots of ruins around, and you can haggle for a hammock. You want the biggest size which is called *matrimonio* or "marriage". You'll be bargaining for this and other items in the marketplace. There's a good trick to successful bargaining. Bargain for something you *don't* want. You'll see how low the price drops. Then you'll have an index when you haggle for the item you want.

Various towns in Mexico feature various goods. Taxco – silver, Puebla – onyx, Oaxaca – blankets, black pottery. San Miguel de Allende and Guanajuato have the best wool sweaters. They make them in the prisons and you get the best prices right at the jailhouse door. There are distribution marketing towns like Toluca and Merida which sell huge amounts of goods. Don't forget about trading here. If you like marketplaces, El Merced in Mexico City is an incredible display. You could spend a week in this market absorbed in the ambience. Things are cheap (wholesale really, although there's no real wholesale/retail in Mexico), but you have to buy by the kilo.

Nearby is El Mercado de las Brujas (the witches' market) with 200 different kinds of tea and all sorts of talismans such as bat's wings and brown Kleenex (which for some reason has been incorporated into Mexican sorcery along with Coca-Cola). If you're searching for Don Juan or Mexico's famous healing bruja, Dona Patchita, you'd be wise to begin here. The biggest, most authentic Indian market scene (open Sundays only) is in Quetzatlan, an absolute must town. Difficult to reach on a long, winding dead-end road (it's only 50 miles northeast of Mexico City but a six-hour drive), it's well worth the effort. The Indians here are so isolated they have a single word for airplane, car, truck and train.

Mexican Stone Statue with sunshade on beach.

In the state of Morelos, just south of Cuatla (Coo-wow-tla), you can tour the ruins of the great sugar plantations, against which Zapata began his "land and liberty" revolution. It was here the guerrilla leader was born, fought and eventually was betrayed. It's still possible to find people who rode these mountain trails with the legendary hero. The adobe hut in which Zapata was born has been preserved as a national monument, where each Mexican president must pay homage. Unfortunately for the Mexican people it has, since Cardenas, been mostly lip service.

Fiestas are an important part of Mexican life. One of the best is the Fiesta de San Miguel in San Miguel de Allende, a jewel of a town three hours' drive north of the capital. The bulls run through the streets and they have the prettiest bullring in North America. There are, of course, dancers, floats, drunks, music and fireworks. Fireworks are probably the most inventive Mexican art form.

Outside San Miguel look for Tlateloco, an eerie pilgrim sanctuary where people whip themselves and press thorns into their scalps. Guanajuato also has to be seen. They have terrific fiestas here, street players, a great theatre and Las Mumias de Guanajuato. It seems the town cemetery has some chemical or curse that doesn't let bodies decay, so after five years they dig up the dead and either burn them or stick 'em in the Museum. It's one of the strangest museums you'll ever stumble upon. They sell candy mummies outside and kids love sucking on the skulls.

Death fascinates Mexicans, ever since Aztec times, when the life expectancey was only about 28 years and blood flowed from tribal warfare and cannibalism. It was believed a man was judged by how he died, not by how he lived. November 2nd, the Day of the Dead, is celebrated nationally; in Patzcuaro in the state of Michoacan people stay up all night and picnic with the dead by candlelight. It's 'way beyond Halloween.

There is literally a fiesta every day somewhere in Mexico. October 4th is Fiesta de San Francisco, and for some reason it's the Indian day to gather by the thousands and take peyote. I know two places where this is done; you should put in some effort and find these on your own. Also remind yourself that the fiestas all have religious significance – the alcoholic *machos* bobbing around the plaza are not what's happening. Indian is just about synonomous with poor, so intermixed are the cultures and bloods, but further south you'll find Indian tribes where they still speak Nahuatl or other tongues and dress in traditional clothing. Drive far enough south and you'll be in the best part of Mexico, which is Guatemala. But that's another trip.

So don't let the scare stories keep you away. But if you'd like to see Mexico maintain its own culture, its wilderness, and not fall under the plow of land developers turning it into one big Holiday Inn, when you come back be sure and tell about those bandits with the gold teeth and how your cousin died from dysentery and did you hear about the shark who managed to get into the pool at the Acapulco Princess? I did – I let him in.

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STEAL THESE GUIDE BOOKS

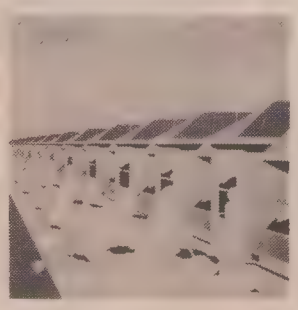
Mexico is without question the best travel deal of this or any season. It's cheap, it's close and it's spectacular. You can play it close to the vest or free and loose. Two can live an exotic life for a few thousand a year. The trick is to pay attention to reality and not get sucked down the rumour tube.

Before you go south of the border, there are loads of good books to read. The best travel book is the *South American Handbook*. It's updated annually, and even though it has a high price, it's way ahead of *Mexico on $5 and $10*, Fielding, or Terry's guide. The *Peoples' Guide to Mexico* is written by good people who speak not with forked tongue. It's best for people who just want to set up a lean-to on the coast and suck on a coconut for six months. It's also an excellent companion to the *Underground Gourmet's Guide to Mexico* which not only has the best info on restaurants but also has side comments worth noting. There are two other books worth a plug. Octavio Paz's *Labyrinth of Solitude*, although written 30 years ago, is still the most insightful contemporary view of the Mexican mind. Jerry Kamstra's *Weed* not only is accurate in its description of the marijuana trade but leads one to believe he has street-smarts on how to get by with little scratch below the border. Mexicophiles anxiously await his next book on the guerilla movement.

Vinylising

SKYHOOKS GUILTY TILL PROVEN INSANE (Mushroom)

There's an old adage in the record biz the first two albums you've got years to write, the third is the watershed, by the fourth you know whether a band's gonna continue, and generally, in what form. That adage is helpful in evaluating *Guilty Till Proven Insane.* The first two 'Hooks elpees *were* written over a period of years, and *mumma!* what a bonus *that* was to the publisher who signed them up as young, undiscovered talent. Those first two elpees are still the largest selling Australian albums ever.



By the third, *Straight In a Gay Gay World,* Macainsh had used the best of his backlog and his new material was often skittish and unresolved. For every fully formed song like *Is This America* or *Crazy Heart,* there seemed two song *ideas* seemingly awaiting proper form, e.g. *Straight In a Gay Gay World* or *The Girl Says She's Bored.*

Still even that album had another 'Hooks trademark—a sort of thin-blooded, high-pitched nervous energy that got them through.

Then guitarist Red Symons left, Bob Spencer joined and after a not very marvellous single, *Party To End All Parties,* the Hooks settled down to a long grind of pub gigs and small halls. Over the months they moulded into a performance-minded outfit that seemed more of a traditional power-rock outfit than the theatrical, satirical group that could rock they'd earlier seemed.

This is where *Guilty Till Proven Insane-* finds 'em. The performance importance of the band is emphasised by the change in producers. Under Ross Wilson the band performance was mostly directed to highlighting various key lines or illustrating the song concept. Under American producer Tommy Leonetti, the idea is to present the band roaring and raging. And they are. For the first time ever drummer Fred Strauks is presented as the beefy wristed thumper he really is. Macainsh goes for straighter more powerhouse bass lines than the idiosyncratic directions previously. Guitarists Spencer and Bongo Starkey revel in powerhousing off each other where the previous Symons/Starkey line up was more concerned with constructing jagged harmony lines.

And this time round, Shirley Strachan eschews his usual Smartarse/Little Boy Innocent axis and settles into delivering with traditional rock singer power. Yes, it's quite a performance from Strachan, and from the band. There are places, like in *Megalomania* where the band explodes like a dynamited brick wall and Shirley roars through the fallout like a sonic matter-destructer. Same goes for *Bbbbbboogie,* a Freddie Strauks song that once upon a time sounded like a send up of the form but under Leonetti turns around to become a raucous example of it.

Even when they slow the pace to a calypso feel on *Twisted Innocence,* the band are champing on the beat, unleashing a serious barrage of rocksound. Someone said when hearing *Women In Uniform* "Jesus, they're not writing *the song* anymore." Which is just another way of saying the Hooks don't sound like they used to.

The change in musical style is best illustrated by *Point In The Distance,* a shimmery musical creation that has Macainsh narrating the part of a robot in a futuristic cybernetic love story. The lyrics probably won't inspire Philip K. Dick's retirement though.

Of the material most in the Skyhooks' trad. mould, *Life In The Modern World* is the most well-crafted. The music is concisely arranged and there's a clever development of the lyrical motif: ***(When the sky meets the earth/ that's the skyline . . . where the needle meets the skin/that's the mainline/and when today meets tomorrow/that's the deadline). All this plus a spirited call/response*** middle eight, and a lurching demented beat.

Then there's *Trouble With The Computer,* performed powerfully, but the lyrics push the thought relentlessly till the whole point is blunted.

In fact there's a fear here that Macainsh is starting to be a little harried by his own reputation as a social commentator. The first two albums had songs polished to a relaxed conciseness, the songs here are often over-wordy and pushing for lyricist points instead of letting them either develop at their own pace, or make no point at all. *Why Don't You All Get Fucked* for instance is a basic aggro song tied in with three social worker case histories. Only thing is, the case history section is virtually extraneous to the overwhelmingly important point of the song, viz; ***WHY DON'T YOU ALL GET FUCKED!!!***

That's the interesting schism point in Skyhooks now—the balance between rock-band performance and song ideas.

Funnily enough, previously the Hooks' tension point was the balance between being an ideas-band or a rock-band.

In the Hooks overall scheme of things, *Guilty Till Proven Insane* is an affirmation of their status as a rock band who can deliver the goods in forthright fashion.

Anthony O'Grady

LOL CREME & KEVIN GODLEY CONSEQUENCES (Mercury)

Just the elaborate packaging and the knowledge of the awesome efforts that were expended in producing this triple album magnum opus was enough to instil me with excitement as I put side one into action on my turntable. Gradually, curiosity was transformed into confusion.

In a nutshell, *Consequences* is the ultimate demonstration record. It calls on the combined elements of Lol Creme and Kevin Godley, Sarah Vaughan, comedian Peter Cook, fifteen months of recording, 250,000 pounds, ($425,000) and the destruction of the world to publicize the real star of the show, the Gizmo. This device, which clips on to the body of the guitar and bows the string to simulate orchestral sounds and other effects, caused the split of Godley and Creme from 10cc.

They had in mind only a demonstration single, but the Gizmo had grander ideas. As if inflicted with elephantiasis, it exploded beyond a measly seven inches and then breached the confines of one album. It finally filled out to a conceptual work just under two hours long. So as not to bog down in tedious intellectualization, the storyline is light on seriousness, particularly with the involvement of Peter Cook. In brief, the world's environment goes haywire and the only thing that can tame the destructive forces is *Blint's Tune,* the concerto that occupies side six.

The real Gizmo album is the first of the triple set. Apart from various synthesizer-like noises, it becomes a talking wind, part of a fireworks display and animal stampede, a forest fire, and even a soprano singing at the end of side one. The most telling piece in terms of resourceful musical effects is *Sleeping Earth* where, amidst Creme's snoring, massed guitars saw away with orchestral melodrama.

Sides three to five are taken up by Peter Cook's brilliantly witty but protracted word-play. He wrote all the dialogue and spoke every part, except for Judy Huxtable's Lulu. It depicts the total irrelevance of a divorce settlement while the world outside lurches to its doom. The Gizmo flits about adding appropriate frills.

Actual songs in the set are few and far between, with only seven over the six sides. Almost all of them are cast in that inimitable 10cc mould. *Five O'Clock In the Morning* and *When Things Go Wrong* in particular are beautifully crafted and typically multi-textured tunes, both with singles potential. But the most newsworthy track is *A Lost Weekend,* where a flabbergasted Godley duets with the highly respected Sarah Vaughan to come up with a tasty bluesy ballad.

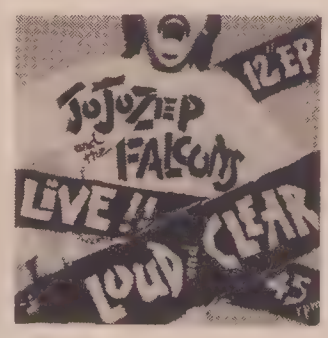
As Godley and Creme have commented themselves, there is a thin line between art and pretension. On *Consequences,* that line is crossed so frequently that it is dizzying to keep the pace. Strikingly original stances nestle beside the trite. At one moment, it is achingly beautiful, the next tearfully drab. The Gizmo itself reveals not only its versatile inventiveness but also its potential for gimmickry.

I admit to being overwhelmed by the ambitiousness of it all, by the record company's unflagging confidence, by the sheer immensity of the production, and by the astounding sounds coaxed from the Gizmo. But on balance, it stands or falls on its ability to entertain or to reach people and that is where I have my doubts.

It is certainly a monumental and probably significant work, lavish in its conception and presentation. But the question remains—is this just art for art's sake? And even if it isn't, how prepared are you to put down hard cash for this ostentatious little lot?

Bill Holdsworth

JO JO ZEP LOUD AND CLEAR (Oz) (epee)



For a band like Jo Jo Zep with a hot live reputation, but a so-so studio track record (two elpees greeted with critical largesse but only moderate sales), a live epee makes a lot of sense.

Add the fact the band was recorded at Martinis, one of the best Melbourne venues for good rockin', and you should have a record of blockbuster proportions.

And in most ways you have.

There are five trax, only one, *Girl Across The Street,* has been recorded previously by Jo Jo. Three of the other four are Jo Jo arrangements of others' toons and there's a Joe Camilleri number *Riding In The Moonlight. Honey Dripper* shows the band in a relaxed (not loose) swing-rock mood. The band is the same as on the second Jo Jo album, *Whip It Out* but here they're captured in an excitable mood—a fact emphasised by the upswing of the energy pendulum on side one—from *Honey Dripper* to *Young Girl* to the stompin' hard nosed Stones-type workout on *Ain't Got No Money.* Side two raises the ante again with a lip-smacking, hot-loins-in-ma-mouth rendition of *Girl Across The Street* (written by drummer Gary Young and the most individualistic number in Jo Jo's original repertoire), *Riding In The Moonlight* finishes the set, not with a wimp, but a solid grinding Stonesy rave-up.

If you've never seriously investigated Jo Jo Zep before, *this* is the place to start. Good rockin' *and* a 12" 45rpm epee.

Anthony O'Grady

IGGY POP & JAMES WILLIAMSON KILL CITY (Bomp)

Kill City was recorded (except for one track, the instrumental *Master Change)* in May '75 at the expense of ex-rock critic/A&R man Ben Edmonds and famed MOR songwriter Jim Webb, using a modest financial donation from the former and the LA demo studio owned by the latter.

Kill City is rightly credited to just The Pop and Williamson because when these songs (except for *I Got Nothing*) were conceived and recorded there was no Stooges left. As such most of these numbers could rightfully be credited as the pair's third shot at a fruitful songwriting partnership, following *Raw Power* and the transitory *Head On The Curve, Cock In My Pocket, Wet My Bed* phase.

The *Kill City* tapes have often been compared favourably with The Stones' *Exile On Main Street* and The Doors' *LA Woman.* Both comparisons have their points of relevance and their shortcomings.

This is after all a definitively Los Angeles album: a real deal gutter view shot at the plush, decadent cameos that The Eagles considered on *Hotel California.*

The title track says it all really with its keen, sharp images of The Promised Land as *Kill City, where the debris meets the sea".* Lines based at the jugular vein of despair itself, motivated purely by the sheer adrenalin pulse of dancing in the ruins and the vaguest feeling that somewhere—beyond all the garbage, beyond all the vicarious highs, lows and in-betweens—might just lie some grand, unimaginable freedom that will swoop down like some great white bird.

The album proceeds through a collection of gutted confession, including a bonus in the classic punk anthem *Beyond The Law,* a bulletin from the abyss where love and hate are inter-changeable in *Johanna* and then the frankly succinct *I Got Nothing.*

Williamson's arrangements meet Iggy's lyrics punch for punch—the fearsome crashing piano chords of the finale to *Johanna,* for example, or the exquisite acoustic guitar that lulls one into *No Sense Of Crime.* In fact this is arguably more Williamson's baby than Iggy's. He picked up the pieces on this project and his talents are what often gives *Kill City* its leading edge.

Both partners are in the ascendant for the album's finest work, *Sell Your Love,* where Ig's passionate diatribe is set against a haunting, tragic melody embellished by fierce sax howls courtesy one John Harden. Williamson in fact uses saxes and keyboards more than his own guitar drive.

Watch this man's work carefully but meanwhile don't bother with most of the other Ig stuff floating around—too much of which strikes me as too ghoulish to bear—and stick with *Kill City,* a potent and suitably dangerous set of excellent rock.

Nick Kent

ALAN PRICE (United Artists)

Alan Price used to be in the Animals when they were rough and "seminal". He arranged the classic *House of the Rising Sun* for them in 1964. Two years later he quit the band, and while Eric Burden carried on to Monterey and beyond, Price released hit versions of *Simon Smith and the Amazing Dancing Bear* and *The House that Jack Built.* Then he teamed up with former blue-beat hero Georgie Fame for *Fame and Price,* a smooth, easily-osmosed cabaret act.

Strictly speaking this album has no place in a rock magazine. It's nothing but cocktail music for the seventies' generation of retired rockers. Rock and roll content is about on a par with Doris Day singing *Whatever Will Be Will Be* back in 1956.

It sounds exactly like a bunch of studio sessionmen working through a series of charts, delivering chops for a handsome fee.

A slightly funky bass-beat here, a touch of the blues there, some strings there, a daring dash of guitar wah-wah there, put it all together and it's *bland.* Nobody ever comes near letting themselves go, it's like they don't want to offend anyone. Well they've failed because they've offended me, trying to pass this blancmange off as rock and roll.

Sniffer Taylor

Vinylising

DISCOPHILIA

Saturday Night Fever is a movie from Paramount Pictures. So when I got the double album to review *(Saturday Night Fever,* RSO) I rang the Paramount flack in my city to see if he could tell me anything about the flick, get me free tickets or send me a press kit. He couldn't do any of those things, would you believe it? Well, he did tell me that it had made twenty-five *million* dollars in twenty-four days (and he did it without the slightest tremor in his voice, too), and he said that there was an article about the film in *T.V. Week*. So, all I can tell you about the picture I got from the publicity photos on the album sleeve. (Catch *me* buying *T.V. Week*, baby!) They foretell a real puke experience, being as how they are all of John Travolta staring intently into the lens and contorting his lithesome body. One ray of hope: the original story was by every rock writer's one-time hero, Nik Cohn. All in all, however, I would say, save your money and buy the album.

In fact, I would say, buy the album even if you haven't saved any money. I would say, actually, buy the album, full stop, period. You aren't going to find a better two-record collection of disco and dance music. *Saturday Night Fever* is the real thing. It is what pop music is always trying to be: a downright pleasure.

Calypso Breakdown and the Trammps' *Disco Inferno* are the two longest tracks–and, by this week's inviolable disco rule, they are the best. *Calypso Breakdown* starts with grassroots Trinidadian rhythm – beating old iron and all. Piano *(piano!)* adds bass rumble-riff punctuation and other instruments are extruded into the mix until–in a breathtaking production/arranging coup–a guitar plucks out one of those simple infectious calypso melodies from long ago just for a moment or two.

Disco Inferno, chosen to close the album, might have been written by the ferocious Nik Cohn himself. It's a scary 10:52 minutes. *"Burn, baby, burn,"* is the chorus, interpolated every now and then with the call to *"Burn that mutha down!"* Here the electric bass line is ominous and threatening throughout, pulsing with power and control. This is hellish hot music, bound to burn any mutha down. It manages to get that way because it never stays still in one place. Stupid people think that disco, because it is dance music, must be monotonous repetition tied to an unchanging beat. But good dance music, any good dance music from the waltz to the boogie, is never that. To dance right the music has to be constantly shifting, realigning the rhythmic emphasis, introducing new sounds and sensations, stimulating the dancer to the kind of interaction between music and movement that dancing is supposed to be about. Disco composers, arrangers, musicians, producers and dancers know this –but critics and deejays never listen carefully enough to the music to understand that crude *and* subtle variation is the heart muscle of good disco. *Disco Inferno* is damn good disco because there is always something happening.

The folks on this record know how to make good disco and Bill Oakes has put all the tracks together well, too. There are offerings here by M.F.S.B, K.C. & the Sunshine Band, Kool & the Gang, Tavares and Yvonne Elliman besides those I have already mentioned. But the album is mainly the Bee Gees, and that is interesting all on its own. for the Bee Gees are nothing if not *ersatz* disco: styrofoam falsies on the chest of Terpsichore. This is not a bad thing (albeit a bad metaphor). The Bee Gees have made a career out of their phoniness, and who are we to argue with success? They do it right – with the right beat, the right production, the right falsetto harmonies and all that. Disco is the proper home for fakery, even fakery of itself, and the Bee Gees sound absolutely at home in disco. The only giveaway really is the kind of song they insist on writing: post-Beatles British pap. Only the Bee Gees can make this sort of trash into silken disco (and they do here, particularly *Stayin' Alive* and *More Than A Woman).*

But there has been an attempt, regrettably, to make other artists sing Bee Gees' material on this album, and that attempt doesn't work. In fact, it makes for several letdown tracks: including *More Than a Woman* by Tavares. I want to emphasize that the fault here is not one of performance or production, but only of material. Black artists sound very uncomfortable with white trash, just as white artists tend to look silly even with ace black material (the Stones' *Love In Vain,* for instance).

Glenn Cizano

BLUE OYSTER CULT SPECTRES (CBS)

Don't Fear the Reaper justifiably became one of the runaway successes of last year's US pop charts. It wasn't exactly traditional BOC fare, but that same year both Kiss and Alice Cooper also scored hits with uncharacteristic, soft-core singles, so there's definitely a market for the cult out there.

Just how to describe Blue Oyster Cult is something of a problem. They're obviously a heavy metal band and proud of their leather-boy, riff-busting heritage, but of late they've grafted on to this gruff machismo some suspicious Top 40 trappings. This album's got it all–pop, rock, heavy metal, love and hate.

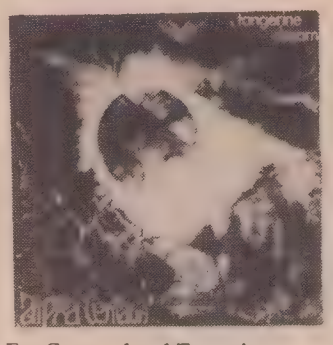
It may not necessarily have been their intent, but their vocals here are *very* pop-oriented. They're mixed well to the fore, on top of a thick blanket of rock and roll, usually chunky guitar chords and occasionally some keyboards to fill in the gaps. There aren't a lot of lead breaks and the songs are short, mostly about four minutes each, all about love, *(Searchin' for Celine, Death Valley Nights),* rock and roll *(Goin' Through The Motions, Godzilla),* or the Cult's own brand of mysticism, *(Fireworks, Nosferatu).*

In amongst the light, almost ethereal vocal treatments are the equally essential BOC riffs. *Godzilla* kicks the album off to a menacing, stomping bass-heavy start, a feeling taken up again on Side 2 with *RU Ready 2 Rock.* The title says it all.

The lead guitar of Donald (Buck Dharma) Roeser is used sparsely, sometimes not at all, and often only in short bursts of frenetic licks as on Allen Lanier's *Searchin' For Celine* and Joe Bouchard's *Nosferatu.* Lanier's keyboards are never given the chance to shine on a solo piece, but colour the texture and complement the mysticism of the lyrics. They're particularly effective on *Celestial The Queen* and *I Love The Night,* layered synthesizers and moody, block piano chords that balance the constant guitar riffing.

Phil Collins

TANGERINE DREAM ALPHA CENTAURI/ ATEM ZEIT (Virgin Records)



For German band Tangerine Dream, *Phaedra* was a crucial album. Sold as "music that melts", it penetrated the English album charts and marked their transition from a purely experimental band. It was not until that album that they totally consolidated their individual approach and converted completely to the synthesized rhythm machine that we know so well today. (Or at least we thought we knew, because the recent *Encore* shows them reverting to guitars, piano and drums, just like the old days.)

Now you can revisit those old days because Virgin have made available their earlier records (with the exception of their first, *Electronic Meditation*). The second, *Alpha Centauri,* which first appeared in 1971, has been coupled with *Atem,* the fourth, which came out in 1973. The double *Zeit* was released between them in 1972.

It is ironic that with the more conventional instruments in tandem with synthesizers, the Tangs were more exploratory in a genuine avant-garde sense. *Alpha* and *Atem* are rightly paired because the music on each is more dramatic, more punctuated, with the debt to early Pink Floyd clearly visible. Spear-tipped synthesizer arcs out of the guitar organ haze. There are aquatic burblings, rumbling echoes and splutters that sound like the rattle of alien metals, or to use a more obvious image, spaceship hums emanating from milky way spirals.

Zeit, the first album on which Peter Baumann joins Edgar Froese and Christoph Franke, was a more successful conception, relying on more subdued, abstract and sequential patterns. (By the way, Baumann has just recently left the band, for possibly the fifth time.) It opens like a muffled swarm of bees that transmute into dark whirlpools which in turn evolve into those ornithopter whirrings that have since become a Dream trademark.

Order is created out of spontaneity as trance-like waves of sound stack up in layers only to slowly dissolve into other frail congregations. And most of that is propelled by cellos! Even more than their recent work, *Zeit,* with its low eerie moans, is music for traversing the void between stars, or for filling the space between your ears.

To be honest, later albums like *Rubycon* or *Ricochet* are much more competent in fulfilling their roles, but then that is as it should be. Still, even as beginnings, these forerunners have more than curiosity value going for them. Listen to *Zeit* on a dark and lonely night and you will appreciate what that means.

Bill Holdsworth

AUTOMATIC MAN VISITORS (Island)

The word is that Automatic Man exhibit facets of all kinds of music, like classical, jazz, rock, soul, etc. Perhaps that was true of the first album (which I haven't heard) but it doesn't happen on *Visitors.* What I hear is a very tight funk rock hybrid. Bayete, the band's, um, brains since Mike Shrieve left, must have upped the funk quotient.

Certainly, the band displays a prowess several levels above street funk, but the mode is still somewhat restrictive, especially in view of their stated aims. There are other problems too. The lyrics, for example, while they avoid the "git down" syndrome, are trashy or trite. *Give It To Me,* a love song, sounds more like a eulogy to communicable social diseases. Then there's the witless sci-fi ditties, *Here I Am Now, Daughter Of Neptune* and *Visitors* (the standard are-we-being-watched ufology theme). Bayete's voice just isn't charismatic enough to instil some sincerity into the songs.

There is a bright side though, and that is Pat Thrall's post-Hendrix scythe of a guitar. He comes into his own on side two, singlehandedly salvaging something from the S.F. tales with action-packed robust lines. But for him, Automatic Man would have been a great name and a good idea gone wrong.

Bill Holdsworth

THE FLYING CIRCUS STEAM TRAINS AND COUNTRY DAYS (AN ANTHOLOGY) (EMI)

Here we have an Australian band infatuated by the very music of the Byrds' collection. Initially, anyway; The Byrds' *Turn, Turn, Turn* and *Wild Mountain Thyme* constituted the Flying Circus' first demo tapes, according to Oz rock historian Glenn *don't forget the* A. Baker, who's been compiling these late sixties/early seventies collections all over the place. He compiled this one with copious notes, photographs and print outs from his photographic memory.

It's a collectors item too, for those interested in preserving Oz rock annals. The Flying Circus went beyond Byrds tunes and wrote their own, some goodies. This lot's got *Hayride,* a major, rather bubblegumish hit for them in its day, still an interesting song; *The Last Train* by the band's Doug Rowe; *Kempsey Mail* by Jim Wynne; a reprise of Leadbelly's *Goodnight Irene.* The recording quality is er, highly variable.

Flying Circus were a fine band. They took themselves to Canada five years ago and didn't get very far, broke up and scattered over Canada, some drifting back to Australia. But their music *is* worth preserving; whether you're sufficiently obssessive to buy the album, covering 1969 to '73, is up to you.

Annie Burton.

SUICIDE RECORDS ARE COMING
"PURE POP FOR MODERN PEOPLE"
TO BE DEPOSED OF BY RCA

1234
THE CRETIN HOP

Tony Parsons, a vengeful Tooth Fairy in London (True!) just can't take The Ramones anymore

Whaaadya mean? Ya got KANGAROOS 'oo can hop better AND they're dumber too. Boy, next time we sees a kangaroo coat, we're gonna stomp it."

Give me your cretins! Your pinheads and geeks! Your misfits, your Mansons, your chain-saw murder freaks! Give me your runts and your brats and Sheena neo-punkies! Your gook-killing Calleys, your *TV Eye* and junkies! Give me your Uncle Sam, give me your Son of Sam! Give me your peanuts and give me your napalm!

Give me your ghettos, your cults and your busted! Your tired, your wired, your commercially viable maladjusted! Give me your girlfriends, your boyfriends and whores! Your track-marks, your butt-scars, your *Star Wars* and gun laws! Give me Teen-age Lobotomy for your sons and your lovers! Give me cheap street chic and give me your brothers!

"UUURRRGHHHEEERAH!" chokes late-twenties lobotomy Dee Dee Ramone sitting squished between his stage brudders Tommy and Johnny Ramone on the back seat of the limousine.

"UUURRRGHHHEEERAH!" the blank bassist reiterates, his gleaming void-oid pigeyes shining with shock – horror – con-fusion under the lank fringe of his lobot-mop-top coiffure. On the verge of total panic, his ham-fist mitts clutch desperately at the gaping mouth above his sagging jaw.

Dee Dee's brudders regard his sudden attack with mild interest without offering assistance or even enquiring what has caused this, uh, *funny turn.* Total detach-ment; they could be watching *Kojak* or a mugging . . . oh, it's a wunnerful town, awright . . .

"UUURRRGHHHEEERAHH!"

Something drops out of Dee Dee's mouth and he catches it, unclenching his fist slowly to reveal . . . one of his teeth. Not a false tooth, a capped tooth or any other kind of man-made tooth, but a genuine God-given, chipped-enamel, full-grown meat tooth with rotted black roots that have got fresh particles of food, blood and pinko gum-flesh still sticking to them.

Dee Dee stares at the tooth in awe. Maybe a minute passes before his brain apparently receives the information per-ceived by his keen, street-wise, perceptive vision.

"Uh, one of ma tooths fell out," he gasps.

His deriding brudders cackle with mocking mirth.

"Sick, sick, sick," quips the moon-featured round-shouldered brudder Tommy. "Sick, Dee Dee, that's really sick."

As a parting shot he adds, "Sick."

"Ohmagard!" smirks the acne-blitzed, shaded, short-arse cheap skin thin as a pin, drumming brudder Tommy. "Ohmagard, Deedee! Ohmagard!"

"Uh-hah-uh-hah-uh-hah!" chuckles brudder Joey.

"Uh-hah-uh-hah-uh-hah, Dee Dee!"

Joey is amused. One of Dee Dee's teeth have just fell out. The brudders are all amused. They are laughing at Dee Dee. Dee Dee is looking at his tooth.

"I'll put it under my pillow," asserts Dee Dee forcefully, and, poor bastard, he ain't joking.

The gaff, you understand, is *blown.* The Ramones, like so many Americans, are as stupid as they look.

The slow-minded quartet try to cover up the reason Dee Dee's pearly-whites are drop-ping from his mouth like pennies from heaven.

"Old age, Dee Dee," Johnny mutters grimly. "Dat's why . . ."

"Uh, yeah," agrees pox-chops Tommy.

". . . uh-huh," Joey nods eventually.

I don't mention that I'm suss to the reason Dee Dee's losing his molars; the brudder (they're not really, just pretend and all Forest Hills) was a long-term self-con-fessed heroin career man who has thankfully, and I quote, "all cleaned up now."

It was Dee Dee who did the groundwork for *Chinese Rocks,* the song Johnny Thunders also helped create.

"Somebody called me on the phone/ They said, 'Hey, is Dee Dee home?/You wanna go an' cop?/Wanna go get some Chinese Rocks?' "

When Dee Dee had all his things in hock, everything in the pawn-shop, the plaster coming off the wall and his girlfriend crying in the shower stall, he was paying for his habit by cruising New York's 53rd & 3rd, the city's sidewalk for male hustlers.

"You'd be walking down the street and run into Dee Dee with some old guy and he'd get embarrassed and say, 'Hey, you guys, have you met my uncle?'," Johnny Thunders told me the first time I inter-viewed him.

Ramones on stage. How high do they go? Well, Dee Dee IS wearing a flyer's helmet. (pix: LFI).

There was much friction last June when The Ramones were threatening law-suits because Thunders' Heartbreakers had recorded *Chinese Rocks* for their first single, a song The Ramones claim as their own while declining to include it in their own repertoire, because, says brudder Johnny, "you've got to draw the line somewhere."

Actually the reason they don't do it, as Thunders claims, is probably that The Ramones are aware that while mass-murder, macho-misogyny and other Teen Rebellion buzzsaw drone pap may be as commercial as their inoffensive little dance songs like *Sheena Is A Punk Rocker, Let's Dance, Do You Wanna Dance* and *Oh Oh I Love Her So,* crooning about h-e-r-o-i-n is going to put them even further away from achieving mass popularity than they are now. They will refute any suggestion that they are putting anybody on, or that it's all a joke, or that they're just cacophonic car-toon characters.

"We were the first, the udders copied us," snarls Johnny.

"We wanna put der kidz in an udder dimension," growls Tommy.

They feel that the way the press have written about The Ramones is because the writers couldn't stand to admit to them-selves that the band DO NOT consider themselves to be *Tom And Jerry,* not even *Fritz The Cat,* but Babble-on Rednecks with genuine resentment, bitterness and raging dreams of revenge and violence.

"They feel *safe* if they think we don't mean it, man . . ."

They hate, uh, Commies and wanted to go out to Vietnam to "kill Chinks."

They got turned down. Whether they lacked in the physical or mental qualifica-tions that Uncle Sham required of his My Lai War Hero Patriots, they don't say, although *my* Ramones albums say it was because of the latter deficiency. But that didn't stop the lame-brain 4F brudders wish-ing and hoping, as *53rd & 3rd* on the first album reveals. It's the only Ramones song where Dee Dee R. gets to sing an entire pathetic, lilting verse of envisioned nemesis.

"If you think you can/Well, come on, man/I was a Green Beret in Vietnam/Hey, no more of your Fairy Stories/53rd and 3rd, standing on the street/53rd and 3rd, I'm try-ing to turn a trick/53rd and 3rd, you're the one they never pick/53rd and 3rd, don't it make you feel sick?/Then I took out my razor blade/Now the cops are after me/But I proved I'm no sissy . . ."

You guessed it; The Brudders Ramone don't like blacks . . . or women. They claim that none of them are married.

"Marriage is worse than dying. If ya split up the *woman* gets half of everything. Why stay with *one* for 50 years? We – heh-heh-heh – advise against marriage . . ."

In fact, the thirtyish Joey Ramone has been married for years. And Dee Dee hasn't been overstruck on the fairer sex since the time a year back when his girl came home early to discover him two timing her and set about her man with a broken bottle.

"Hey, how many hours to go before we go home?" asks Tommy R.

"Eighteen hours." It's taken five minutes to work out.

"They keep ticking away dere . . ."

"Let's make it as short as possible tonight, huh?" urges Johnny.

"Yeah, get it over as soon as we can," nods Tommy.

"Keep it short," Joey sways, his Village Idiot head scraping the top of the limo.

"Get it over with quick," Dee Dee parrots.

Hey lads, good to see ya enjoying yourselves in England!

The show stinks. The audience love it. The power of auto-suggestion. Hell, I don't have to pay to watch this stuff, I can't blame you for a policy of compulsory enjoyment after you've forked out good money you had to perspire to earn. And – I admit – for about the first ten minutes of the show the spectacle of four pompous urban redneck morons making themselves look complete arseholes amused me to the point of side-splitting hilarity. But larf?, I nearly puked up. The brudders offensive tactics of rushing the show so they can piss-off back to America as soon as possible was an insult to everybody.

Joey standing starting-block jock stance, missing lines, singing in offhand couldn't-giveashit-man monotone, half heartedly holding the *Gabba Gabba Hey* sign at shoulder height and dropping it before *Pinhead* was even over while deliriously enthusiastic kids punched the air with limitless enthusiasm and pig-brain security guards leapt upon anyone straying from the vicinity of the eighteen-square-inches danc-ing area alloted them.

Tommy Ramone is in all probability one of the most laid-back drummers in showbiz, gently swishing his sticks across the skins and probably wishing he was back at the Holiday Inn in Marble Arch.

Johnny and Dee Dee wear cornball Minnie Mouse print tee-shirts. Dee Dee has the habit of knocking over his mike-stand. Bum notes abound (sorry, Dee Dee) and during the middle of one song Johnny absent-mindedly slips into the simplistic chord progression of *an udder song.*

Before Danny Fields was the manager of The Ramones he assisted MC5, Iggy Pop and Jim Morrison in their vocations, as well as some time as a rock-journalist. A short, fat, blow-dried business-man, Fields does the brudders' tinking for them and both regards them as Primitive Geniuses while being totally aware of the strictly cult status of The Ramones.

"The Ramones are *nowhere near* getting a hit single in America," he concedes.

"The Ramones are nowhere near any kind of mass-acceptance . . . punk-rock is still very much a minority thing, the kids are still all buying Kiss, Frampton and Fleetwood Mac. When Johnny Rotten was on the cover of *Rolling Stone* it sold less copies than it has done for *years.* Slogans mean nothing in America. That's why Malcolm McLaren giving the New York Dolls a communist image was so ludicrous – everyone just dismissed it, but if they'd actually *meant* it they would have been in bigger trouble."

Dee Dee Ramone says he doesn't mind people spitting at him when The Ramones are on stage. Actually, this information is incorrect. Dee Dee gets very mad when a stream of gob hits him, he goes bleedin' beserk. Dee Dee does not appear to remem-ber this fact. "Nah, I don't mind it . . . it looks like snot . . . I mind it when it's in my eye because then 'I CAN'T SEE!" Dee Dee chuckles pleasantly. "When it's on my hand it makes my plectrum slippery to hold!"

This week's letters were found wandering aimlessly in the slum area of Glebe, looking for the RAM office. They were typeset by Blotch & Mistake and printed by Black On Black Graphics. The originals were thrust onto a sub-editor's spike. Gee it's hard being a letter in a slum. To complete the torture, Anthony O'Grady answered 'em.

STIFF (I)

Now you've done a free disc with new English talent (and thanks for it, it was good) how about doing one for Australian new talent?

Oz Lover
Melbourne.

We'd love to. All we need is an Oz record company to get involved.

STIFF (II)

Your Stiff flexi-disc was floppy. Can I return mine for a full set of Elvis Costello and Ian Dury albums?

Helen Read
Adelaide

No.

STIFF (III)

Just want to thank you for the flexi-disc. It played just fine. I'd never heard Elvis Costello or Ian Dury before but now I have I'm a fan. Should I thank you or be slightly resentful at being taken in by a marketing ploy.

Ian Birch
Perth

Be thankful.

STIFF (IV)

My Stiff flexi-disc stuffed up before it got half way through *Watching The Detectives.* It also had a dent in it.

Stiff shit for me, eh.

This so annoyed me that the next day I bought *My Aim Is True,* so that I could hear Elvis without bumps and clicks.

Someone at EMI is a smart cookie.

A. Detective
Baker Street

Some newsagents really stuffed it up (and bent it) for us and you. But what do they care? They're there to sell the Woman's Weekly, right? Next time we'll provide a solid cardboard backing so **ALL** *discs will keep in shape.*

ELO

Of all the fucked things I've read about, ELO playing tapes at their Australian concerts was the worst. *(RAM No. 79).*

Who are these bums anyway? Do they think they can come out and con audiences and get away with it?

I'm really angry because I went to see ELO and thought they were great. I was amazed at the sound and loved them for being able to sound just like their records. I never thought they'd be able to do it. Now I know *how* they did it and I'm so angry I could smash every ELO record I own. (I have a full set, but I won't smash them, 'cos it'd cost too much if I ever wanted to play them again).

Listen ELO if you can't really do it on stage, stop trying to pretend you can. If I'd seen the tape recorders you used I'd have smashed them, to *make you play honestly.* I don't want to pay $10 to see someone mime.

Terry Jackson
Sydney.

YER BIRFDEY

Congratulations on three years of good rock journalism. And I hope you'll be around for another three.

A.M.

(Sniffle) Birthday cards always get us right in the **hort.**

AEROSMITH

Glad to see Aerosmith rate a mention with Ross Debris' review cum rave in RAM 79. Seems they rarely receive coverage out here. Couldn't agree more with what Debris said. If CBS got off their collective asses and pushed Aerosmith in Oz they'd have $UCCE$$ on their hands. Aerosmith shit over other rock imitators.

Doubly nice to see Foghat given a few words, as they deserve.

Thank Auntie Flo, Boobs Burton didn't get a chance to stick her claws into 'em.

Long Live Good Rock
Dazed, Confused but Back in The Saddle

Annie Burton is currently on holidays. Aerosmith are still in the US. Both parties intend to keep a respectful distance from each other.

RAINBOW (I)

I think your mag is great but howz about having somethin' on Rainbow or Zep or Floyd or somethin' grouse like that instead of havin' that punk rock shit.

Anybody who likes punk rock must be mad. All those guys do is spew up and anybody can do that.

Janine
Ram Lover

There's a Rainbow story this very ish. Lucky you. On the other hand, don't read it. You'll just cry when you realise they wanted to tour Oz in Feb but couldn't.

RAINBOW (II)

How about a story on Deep Purple since I am an avid fan. If this can't be done I'll put up with one on Rainbow. Thanks for a great mag.

Yours Thankfully
Dizzi Rapture

What is this? **Rainbow Week** *or sumfing?*

FUCKED

What ever happened to *Why don't you all get fucked* (issue 78). *Women in Uniform* is the best Hookz have ever come up with, but I was so looking forward to . . . "getting fucked" as the song goes.

Who's idea was the er, um, ah, single (12"). Great one Hookz.

"A. Hooker"
NSW

Straight after we went to press, the Hooks changed the single to 'Women'. 'Get Fucked' is on the new album (see review this ish).

SCAGGS

I'd like to voice my opinion of Boz Scaggs in Brisbane. He was a complete disappointment. Got a nice arse but that, by no means, compensates a lousy concert.

Boz ain't no buzz — he's fucked.

Ex B.S. Fan
Mt Isa, Q.

SMALL

Short People Rule.

Randy Newman get Stuffed.

Randolph the Green Tree Frog

Made you feel like a small frog in a big pond, eh?

MARS

Is it true cold Mars bars are sexually stimulating?

Phil Moyes
(address withheld)
(my parents won't tell me)

All depends where you eat them.

BABYS

Could you please have an article in your terrific mag about the Babys. I've been reading RAM for twelve months and think it's great, I also think The Babys are great.

So be a sport and send one of your reporters to the States to grab an interview and some pics. (I'll even pay for the plane fare!!)

Elizabeth Wilkinson (Ms)

Send plane fare immediately.

BOWELS

This is a plug for the most exciting band in Existence (ten miles out of Adelaide) at the moment. Their name is *Ivan Bowel Trouble and the Shit-stirrers.* They are having their first single released in a month, on Errata Records — titles being *Fuck Me* and *Fuck You.* The first 18 million copies will be pressed on one-inch multi-coloured edible fluorescent vinyl, so don't delay — find Bowel-Trouble today! *SIGNED* — Their publicist — whoops, no I'm not — Their Manager — no! no! — One of the Members — I'm not! — um, er, ah forget it.

OK, we will.

BIG IS BAD

To me one of the great tragidies of rock and roll is the large concert hall catering for 10,000 plus. The band you used to know in the suburban dance halls, the pubs and the free concerts, is turned into "them" up "there" seemingly miles away, dressed up really cool and you pay double to see them play half the time. If you dare try and rage or dance in the passageways, you get chucked out/bashed up by the bouncers, or abused by the dudes sitting in their seats only half taking in the band, while trying desperately to look cool. No large hall, to me, would ever beat getting down in a smaller venue where you can get so far off on the band that you don't come down till next week. This is how I remember them, as I sit painfully through their shows, stuck high in the sky in some crappy little seat, admiring them from afar. So this is what fame and fortune, promoters and public drive bands to these days. I would be most interested in what the bands themselves think of this matter. And does it warrant an article?

I'd really love to see one.

April

In that case, read the numerous RAMs over the past three months that have bemoaned your complaint in great detail.

DYLAN

I hear Dylan sold out both his Brisbane concerts in three hours, that would come as a bit of a surprise if you listened to all that bullshit Annie Burton was handing out, in her pre-review of Bob Dylan in RAM No. 77, about being surprised if "Dylan could sell out his Australian concerts."

I'd be surprised if Miss Burton had more brains than a mentally retarded, physically handicapped, sexually deprived, pregnant, blind and crippled hedgehog.

Next time you have to write about the best songwriter that ever lived consult someone who knows what they're talking about.

Yours lovingly
S. Scofield
NSW

OK. So you want to be a Lemming for The Legend. What RAM has been saying for the past three months is what the NSW Govt is finally realising — mammoth outdoor concerts make big money for the artist and promoter and provide uncertain value for the majority of punters, some of whom **really care** *about the music. At the moment, we're a minority voice but we have confidence the message will get through, given time and enough disappointed concert goers.*

UNEMPLOYMENT

We appreciated your handling of the article about the increasing number of unemployed youths in Australia. As a magazine who rely on young people for circulation it is good to see you actually doing something *political* for young people.

But the excuses the employers give for the shit they lay down on the unemployed weren't really worth printing for anything other than a good laugh. *More, stronger* articles exposing just how the shits who run this country are running the young into the ground would be very welcome.

Thank You and Regards
Three Concerned

It's all a conspiracy by the Crazy Grazier, right?

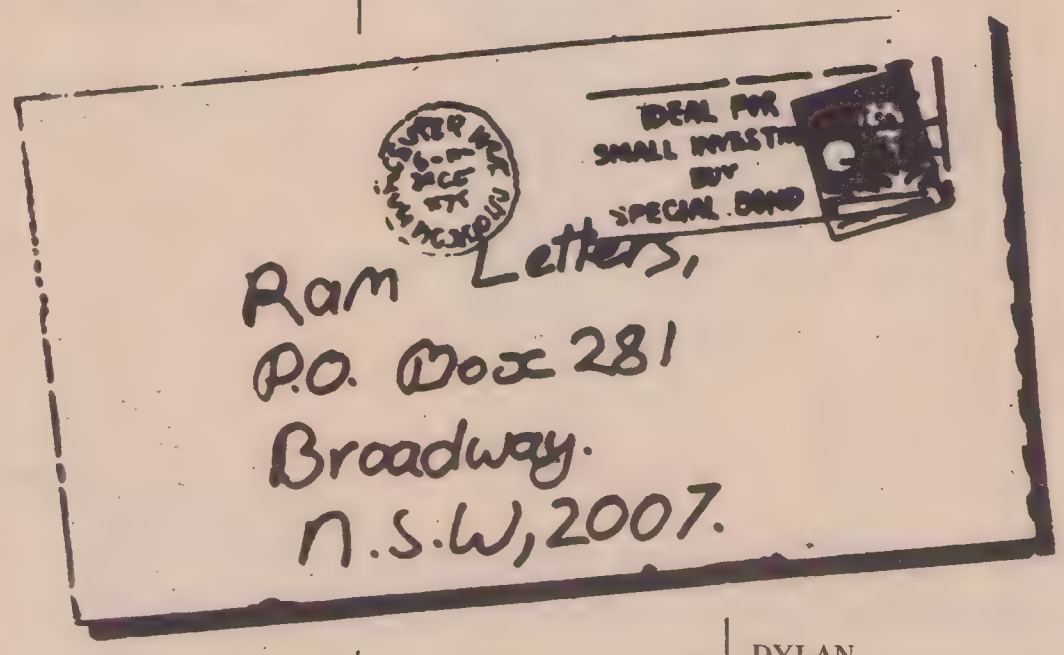
WANTED: WAR!

It is enough for me to say I have become the enemy of a society I consider to be criminal . . .

Have the courage of your crimes, you bourgeois, and you will admit that such reprisals are legitimate. In the merciless war we have declared against the ruling class, we demand no mercy. We inflict death and we know how to undergo it. It is with indifference that I await your verdict. I know my head will not be the last you cut off. You have hung people in Chicago, decapitated them in Germany, shot them down in Barcelona, guillotined them in Paris. But what you will never be able to destroy is ANARCHY. It's roots are too deep . . . it's everywhere."—Emile Henry.

"We think Punk Rock is the result of today's yough having missed out on a war."—Nico and Eno.

You have to be honest to be outside the war—Bob Dylan once said something like that.



DYLAN

Recently, after camping overnight on a very inhospitable footpath and getting somewhere in the vicinity of the head of the queue for Dylan tickets, I was rudely awakened by a rather grotesque looking tatooed monster telling me that if I didn't move and let "his woman" into the queue ahead of me, he'd let me know about it. Well, being the anti male chauv. campaigner that I am, I promptly told him to get fucked. To this he muttered a few rather nasty phrases and prepared to pulverize me. But, being informed of my civil liberties, I told him that if he laid a hand on me I'd call my man (pointing to some over-six-foot-monster conversing a few furlongs back in the queue), the police, or both (not knowing which would be worse). With that, he spat at me, and stalked off to victimize some other defenceless woman in the queue. All this is to prove my point, you can't even go to buy Dylan tickets without risking death, near death, or both. Surely we, the general ticket buying public, deserve some protection from hairy oafs like this.

An irate Dylan freak

You gotta be bigger and tougher than people in the line if you wanna jump the queue. Bob Dylan never said that 'cos he's never had to queue for tickets at one of his own Superbowl shows.

Hey, that wasn't too painful, was it? Better than a dentist without anaesthetic anyway. Let's do it again next fortnight. Write now.

LIGGING

(Ligger: someone who cruises around checking out the action).

MELBOURNE

The traditional problem with Melbourne is, whenever you're out determined to rage until your very identity becomes a blur, by the time you're halfway there, every pub in town has closed.

The truth is, after 11.30 pm Melbourne is virtually a ghost town. Sydney has a cluster of late-nite places where they wouldn't think of hauling you from under the table and kicking you into the gutters until 3.00 am. And this is the way it should be.

At the moment the Great Late Hope for Melbourne is Bombay Rock. The Bombay had been going last year, but there were lease problems and the place closed. Now under the appellation *Bombay Rock—The Second Coming,* it's re-opened in a re-converted Greek Club on the fringes of rough, tough, slummy Brunswick.

From a jaded Sydneysider's point of view, it's not bad. There are two floors. The bottom has tables, a stage, and pinball machines *(three balls for 20c. Yeeeeeeech!)* Upstairs has a bar, a raised seating area, a cluster of tables on the floor, a dance floor and a stage.

It's a long rectangular room pretty much like Sydney's notorious Lifesaver but the Bombay's bar, instead of running the length of room like the Lifesaver's, is crammed into a small alcove which means the majority of liggers are up there pushing for trough space while the band plays to deserted tables about fifty yards down the hall. They've obviously got to find some way of spreading out the crowd, but Michael Gudinski, whose agency Premier Artists has a share in the place, says renovations and improvements have only just begun. Before the club's opening they'd only had time to paint the walls a deep red and hang giant-size photos of Mushroom artists such as the original Skyhooks. Actually the Premier Artists/Mushroom axis in the place is pushed a bit blatantly, what with every second record on the disco machine a Mushroom product, and only Premier Artist bands have so far been used. Still it's their place, and they can put who they want and play what they want.

Of the acts appearing over the first three days, Sports probably outshone everyone—tight sets, determined singing, good dancing songs and beefy arrangements. Sports are the answer to anyone who ever asked why the Oz pub scene has never thrown up anyone with the vitality and presence of a Graham Parker and The Rumour or an Elvis Costello. Other notables appearing were Stars and Ross Wilson's Mondo Rock (Ross looked lonely on stage, with a featureless band behind him and the crowd clustering around the bar fifty yards in front of him).

Admission price is a hefty $4.50, not out of the question for a single in search of excitement but if your companion wants to go, tell 'em to buy their own way in. The bouncers are heavies in black t-shirts who stalk about looking for heads to knock in. I know, 'cos after leaving I wandered back to buy cigarettes and they wanted to knock m'teeth in.

Still, if you employ apes you've gotta expect monkey business.

Apart from all that, the opening week showed the place *is* popular and people *do* have a good time there. Everyone's happy.

Anthony O'Grady

PERTH

Parkerville Amphitheatre is just about the only regular outdoor venue for rock music in Perth. Sure it's twenty miles out of town and stuck in the middle of a bloody great National Park, but what did you expect for your money? Afterall, to the place's credit, it has got plenty of seating, a great sound and a billabong of sorts.

Actually, Parkerville's a naturally formed acoustic-basin that only needs a bit of money spent on it to make it a wondrous place. As is, the council who own it are getting stroppy with the guy who's leasing it, and the stage is unsafe. . . well I think that's the problem. I hope they make up and get the stage back in action.

I arrived in time to miss the first band who were on but did manage to catch The Elks. They were, as usual, tight, bluesy and wooing all the females in the audience. The temporary stage was at ground level so it wasn't long before the Elks became obscured by dancing hordes of Elkettes. Still, you could hear them, especially the hot mouth organ that came courtesy of Mr. Czar—maybe that's what does it.

Meanwhile, in the not too deep or distant pool, elements of a certain unamed bikie contingent were giving a display of tattoo arrangement to any ladies who cared to watch.

Back on the stage, a new group, Visitor, were making first use of the fading light. Pink Floyd re-visited. They built up an awesome sound courtesy of their strings-and-things keyboards man, then proceeded to top it off with a bit of the old cosmic meandering from their guitarist. He indulged in various techniques that fitted the atmosphere of the place so very well. The set was basically a young man's guide through the English School of Techno flash but they did it with enough style, skill and enthusiasm to warrant such B.O.F. stuff. Great.

Eventually, Matt Taylor wandered onto the stage and proceeded to show that even old (relatively) bluesmen can progress. His re-emergence, on this showing at least, can be in no small way directly attributed to the talented group of players who form his band, Western Flyer.

The material they played was all new stuff written during Matt's stay over here. Seems like he's adopted the West by the way he made a point of *that,* not to mention the name of the group, of course. Don't worry though, the voice and harp blowing are as of old. Combine them with the odd squirt of liquid guitar and sinewy rhythm and you've got a pretty commercial sounding band. Look out for their album.

Matt in his role of the peace-loving musician did look truly grieved when a spot of violence broke out during his performance. Hope he just writes a song about it, rather than disappear to his commune again, oh well.

There's another Parkerville show on in April, I think, whenever it is catch it, 'cos there mightn't be anymore. Is this worth a protest march?

Dave Martin.

SYDNEY

In Sydney, packs of hammerhead sharks are roaming the harbour in search of little sprogs' legs, Skyhooks are running wild in the streets and the Suburbs are *happening.* Dave Warner From The Suburbs to be precise.

He comes from a joint near Africa called Perth and his band could very well be the best thing W.A.'s produced since Lang Hancock said Fraser was impotent and gave Joh a slice of yellowcake. I mean, here's an outfit from the end of the earth that actually *does it.* Sounding like an illegitimate synthesis of Skyhooks and a Lou Reed combo, they smoulder like the aftermath of Hiroshima and wake you up like a lawn mower on Sunday morning.

Warner himself, looks like a refugee from the suck-more-piss-at-the footy-on-a-Saturday-arvo syndrome. He comes across like Ralph Nader on speed, tears everything apart from his position behind an electric piano and is, in a word, vital.

Dave Warner from The Suburbs supported Skyhooks at a Uni gig in the Union Refectory which, as Greg Macainsh pointed out, should be renamed the Reflectory. The acoustics were that bad. The Hooks went over well though previewing material from *Guilty 'Til Proven Insane* and screaming through a blitzkreig version of *Women In Uniform.* Yeah, the Hooks are a rock 'n' roll band. Hotter than magnesium, and no small part of it is due to the guitar work of Bob Spencer.

Obviously, the bespectactled lad has been keeping in practice. While the Hooks were in town he turned up for a blow at a benefit organised for Lee Dillo. Pulled together by the staff at the Bondi Lifesaver, Terry Hannigan, Feather, Rockwell T. James And The Rhythm Aces, John Paul Young and Angry Anderson got up with various friends and took the party to the stage. Jeeeze, ya should'a been there Blue. J.P.Y. even dedicated *Take The Money And Run* to Dillo, a well known restauranteur cum enterpreneur who was involved in a serious car accident that could cost him the sight in one eye. The Double Bay set was there in strength, raffling off free lunches and hittin' the piss with everybody else. Normally, the Lifesaver is dead on a Wednesday night, but not this time. She raged. Mind you, J.P.Y. and Angry Anderson did have a bit of trouble harmonising.

Andrew McMillan

ADELAIDE

Sydney band Crossfire were in town last week, playing a variety of venues around town, including the Tivoli, the Marryatville, Flinders Uni Tavern and Adelaide's jazz centre, the Creole Room. Crossfire play, and have done for many years, a jazz rock fusion in the style of Weather Report and Chick Corea. Smooth fluid music that ripples through your head and leaves you feeling relaxed and loose. The band must be one of the few operating in Australia without the aid of a mixer (the desk with all the knobs and buttons that sound engineers use to balance the sounds of the different instruments and microphones). There was none of the 1-2-3-4 that a lot of bands use to get the beat of a number: bass player Greg Lyon would just nod his head and zap! the band were there, on the beat. Crossfire don't get the chance to tour much because all the band are in such demand as session musicians so it was a treat to see them in Adelaide. It's always great to see professional musicians on stage playing their songs and getting that musical interplay going, bouncing ideas off each others instruments, telling musical jokes, egging each other into areas unexplored in the confines of a recording studio . . . I hope it's not too long before we see them back again.

Donald Robertson

BRISBANE

The National Hotel on the corner of Queen and Adelaide Streets, in the city, is one venue visiting bands inevitably end up playing. Typical of most inner-city pubs, The National has always had a colourful reputation. During the late sixties the hotel, and clientele, achieved notoriety with the discovery of a large massage parlor racket, involving police, operating in the hotel.

These days the clientele is much the same, though a wider group of crazies is evident. On any nite a good sprinkling of grease, hippies, punks, camps and

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ethnics is likely to be found. This volatile mixture gets a little exciting at times; especially when the grease decide to do a bit of hippy-bashing, the blacks a bit of poofter-bashing, and so on. Many a roadie has had to stave off brawling drunks in order to save the band's equipment. The Mother Goose crew will testify to that fact.

Unfortunately for the punter, but good for the management, the place is extremely popular and packed with 900 people on a good night. There's never an inch of space when a name band appears.

Quite fortunately for Cheek they happened to be playing the National for two weeks, at a time when their single, *So Much In Love,* was rapidly moving up the 4IP chartz. Formerly known as Punkz, this spunky five-piece pop group is the current great white hope of eccentric manager and rock historian, Glenn Baker; his hulking form was soon evident lurking on the top floor, where Cheek were alternating with a disco-machine. As per usual Baker was not slow to get a word in. "It was the best thing I ever did," he said, commenting on his split with Ol '55, "I should've left when Frankie left ages ago." Of course he soon moved on to other topics like his American-released book on the Bee Gees, the 25 record set for Festival and Cheek.

"The best looking front-line in the country," says Baker without flinching. "And what's more we're not ashamed of being a little girls' band. We know we've got the ability to back it up."

Their repertoire is culled from the sixties, mainly classic pop singles. For example, their final bracket kicked off with the Who's classic pop single, *Substitute,* which was attacked with considerable vigour. *Out Of Time* followed up, keeping the vibe very '60's. *Little Queenie* got the place rocking, followed by *Let's Spend The Night Together* and *Honky Tonk Woman.*

As the set drew to a close Cheek managed to call on an energy reserve for the final three songs. *You Really Got Me* actually saw a few punks attempt the pogo. The classic Easybeats' number, *She's So Fine,* an excellent choice, rounded out the set. Predictably the encore was *So Much In Love.*

To all intents and purposes Cheek are a tight pub band with a rather wholesome, clean image—which is rather incongruous with the material they play. In the debauched surrounds of the National, their pink jeans and knee-length boots looked rather angelic. Still, if it sells singles, Glenn Baker's happy.

Ross Gardiner

BAND OF THE WEEK

STILETTO

IN ADELAIDE

Stiletto has changed noticably in past months. After the loss of Janie Conway they've become more guitar dominated, or rather the guitar playing has become more prominent, with Andrew Bell and Chris Worrall swopping fiery solos. The songs have lengthened to allow for 'the boys' to let go and consequently the instrumentation often overtly dominates the lyrics. That horrible, much used comparison with Skyhooks is no longer valid criticism. They'll never remove it from *Cream* but elsewhere there's not the slightest similarity.

Musically they get better every performance, especially Celeste Howden, with her solid, thudding bass playing gaining a more distinct place in the band's overall sound. Stiletto now concentrate on presenting themselves as five performers, not Janie Clifton singing with four backing musicians. Andrew, Eddie, and Chris all sing and on stage they're spread evenly so that Janie becomes one of the band and not just the singer in a rock 'n' roll band. Chris, in particular, looks like he's got his eyes on being a rock 'n' roll *STAR.* Early in the first bracket he takes centre stage and microphone for a rousing version of Elvis Costello's *Mystery Dance.* Real Stiff-like. It's great.

Eddie does his expose on the media, *Epistomological Rock* and Andrew sings the mandatory Stones cover *Carol.* As they said after playing to the animals at Adelaide Uni's Orientation Ball, "We should have played *Carol* all night—they would never have noticed the difference". The animals (and I use the description intentionally) not only tipped over Stiletto's mixer during one of the regular beer fights, but pulled all the cords out and poured beer over what was left. Janie abused the 'fuckwits/arseholes' concluding that, "this would never have happened at Flinders Uni!!!"

The Flinders performance, outside near the lake on a hot sultry night was superb. A good audience, great surroundings, perfect sound and a band playing at their best. Oops, I forgot, the speakers on one side did fall over and almost decapitate some individuals but them's the breaks. No one was hurt. Like other nights they started with *Doctor Doctor* and went through *The Man,* an excellent *Rossaline, Consumer Rash,* the new single *Bluebirds, I've Been Sleeping In The Middle of the Bed, Rock 'n' Roll Man,* their polite, poetic version of Wayne County and the Electric Chairs' *If You don't Want To Fuck Me, Fuck Off* —Stiletto's expression of the same sentiments is *Teasin' Man, Public Enemy No 1* and for the only time in Adelaide, *Pre Menstrual Blues.* Each time they come back they've learnt a killer song to finish their sets. First it was *Cream,* then *I Don't Wanna Die In A Nuclear War,* and this time *Licence to Rage,* being, amongst other things, about a rock 'n' roll band on stage with a licence to rage. That's pretty much what they did.

Stiletto have some of Australia's best songwriters contributing to their repertoire in ex-Bleeding Hearts' backbone, Martin Armiger, and writer Helen Garner whose novel *Monkey Grip* contains some Stiletto-like characters.

Their orientation is towards mass popularity, because as they say, "What's the use of being a great unknown band? We've got things to say and we want to say them to a big audience."

I for one hope they do 'make it'. They're a band that deserves to be heard by more than the dedicated few. It's the people who don't recognise sexism and oppression in its ten million forms who should hear Stiletto. They play great, dancable rock 'n' roll.

Stuart Coupe.

Workshops, Good Causes etcetera

A musician's co-op has been formed in Sydney's Western suburbs. Run by a few local musicians in conjunction with the Blacktown Council, the co-op will be organising seminars, visits to recording studios and live work for local bands. To kick it off, a workshop/concert will be held on **Sunday April 2** *at the Blacktown Civic Centre.*

Some people called Carrum Sound are offering a mail order creative verse and songwriting course. We haven't had a geek at the volume (s) but they say **you** *can geek, just write to Carrum Sound, Box 31 Mt Waverly Vic. 3149* **or** *Box 27, Plympton, S.A. 5038.*

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MARCH 29/30
NEW WAVE NITE
WITH X-RAY-Z
BOYS NEXT DOOR
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MARCH 31
AYERS ROCK
RED HOT PEPPERS
DAVE WARNERS FROM THE SUBURBS

APRIL 1
APRIL FOOLS DAY SPECIAL
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LAST CHANCE CAFE
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APRIL 5/6
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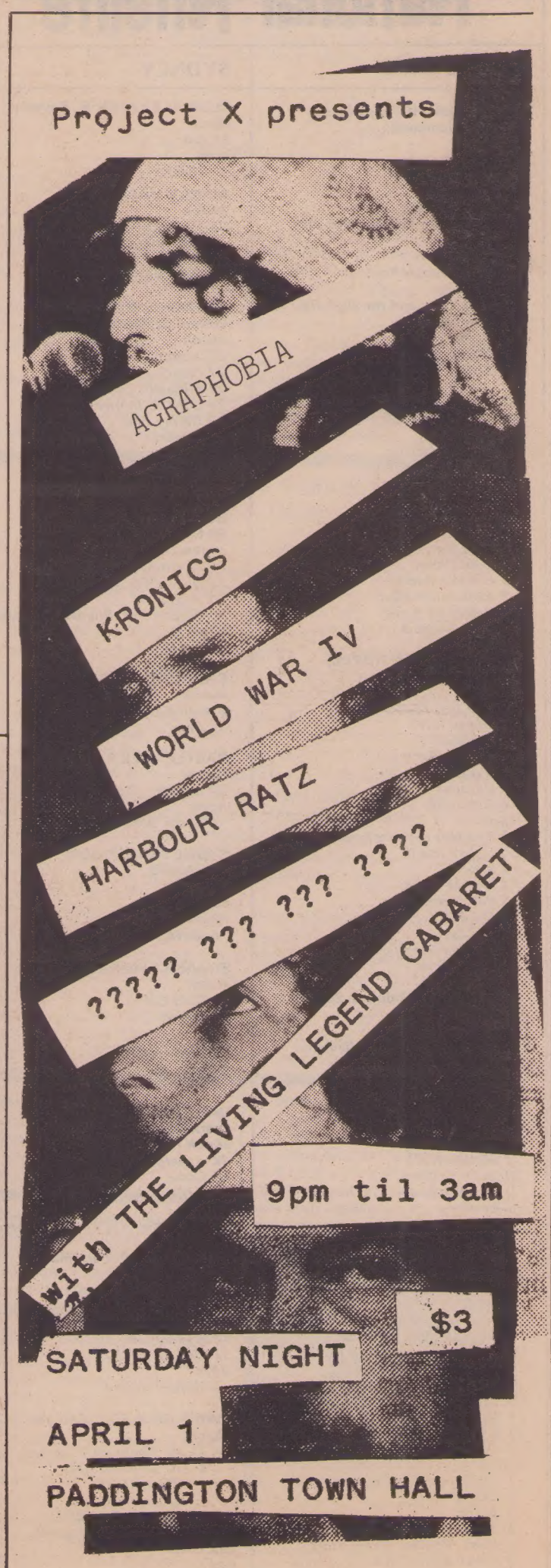

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National Nitelife

MELBOURNE

KINGSTON HOTEL, Highett Street, Richmond.
March
25 Auto Drifters
27,28 Sports
29 Spitfire
30 Mondo Rock
31 Paul Kelly and the High Rise Bomber.
April
1 Dave Warner From The Suburbs
5 Paul Kelly and the High Rise Bombers
6 Captain Matchbox
7 X-Ray-Z
8 Living Legends

STATION HOTEL, Greville Street, Prahran
March
25 Stiletto (arvo) Blue Rockets (eve)
28 Sultan Brothers
30 Lois Lane
31 Mick Elliot Band
April
1 Blue Rockets
4 Cold Chisel
6 Hot Air Band
7 Mick Elliot Band
8 Rainshine (arvo) Blue Rockets (eve)

PROSPECT HILL HOTEL, High Street, Kew
March
25 Red Hot Peppers (arvo) Gypsy (eve)
27 Scandal
28 Mondo Rock
29 Ayers Rock
30 Octopus
31 Mahogany
April
1 Red Hot Peppers (arvo) Gypsy (eve)
3 Scandal
4 Mondo Rock
5 Phil Manning
6 Band Aid
7 Mahogany
8 Phil Manning (arvo) Gypsy (eve)

MARTINIS, Rathdowne Street, Carlton
March
25 Paul Kelly and the High Rise Bombers
28 Red Hot Peppers
29 Living Legends
30 Ayers Rock
31 Avalanche
April
1 Mondo Rock
4 Auto Drifters
5 Dr. Pepper and The Interns
6 Sports
7 Manning
8 Mick Elliot Band

BOMBAY ROCK, 1 Phoenix Street, Brunswick
March
25 Jo Jo Zep and The Falcons/ Stylus/Living Legends
27 Ross Wilson's Mondo Rock/ One Night Stand
29 Texas
30 X-Ray-Z, JAB, Boys Next Door/Teenage Radio Stars
31 Ayers Rock, Red Hot Peppers, Dave Warner from the Suburb.
April
1 Skyhooks, Ferrets, Last Chance Cafe
5 Texas
6 X-Ray-Z, JAB, Boys Next Door, Teenage Radio Stars
7 Kevin Borich Express, Angels, Spitfire

SYDNEY

CLUB ALEXANDER, Revesby
March
31 Jade
April
1 Cheek

MANLY VALE HOTEL
March
25 Richard Clapton Daniel
31 Big Swifty, Rose Tattoo
April
1 Big Swifty, Kevin Borich

FRENCH'S WINE BAR– Oxford St, Darlinghurst
March
25 Jasmin
27 Parachute
28 Midnight Oil
29 Cyril B. Bunter Band
30 Ebony Fair
31 Arnhem
April
1 Berlin
3 Last Chance Cafe

BONDI LIFESAVER 56 Ebley St, Bondi Junction
March
24 Kevin Borich, Flowers
25 Big Swifty, Rose Tattoo
26 Angels
31 Fingerprint, Bilgola Bop Band
April
1 Feather

CARINGBAH HOTEL
March
25&30 Kevin Borich
31 Stars

CASTLE HILL R.S.L.
March
28 Angels
April
4 Kevin Borich

SYDNEY UNI-UNION THEATRE
March
29 Borich
April
6 Ferrets, Mother Goose

SWANSEA WORKERS CLUB
March
24 Cold Chisel
31 Daniel

DAPTO LEAGUES
April
2 Toons

CARLTON REX HOTEL, Castlereagh St., City
March
24 Angels
29 Coco
30 Eddie Haley & The Starlighters
April
5 Eddie Haley & The Starlighters

WAR & PEACE, Parramatta
March
25 Squeeze
28 Arnham
29 Kevin Borich Express
30 Ayers Rock
31 Milford Sound
April
1 Milford Sound

MAROUBRA SEALS CLUB
March
24,25,26, Rockwell T. James & The Rhythm Aces
30,31 Midnight Oil

STAGE DOOR TAVERN, Cnr Castlereagh & Campbell Sts. City.
March
25 Cold Chisel
31 Kevin Borich Express
April
1 Rose Tattoo

NEWCASTLE WORKERS
April
2 Richard Clapton
3 Kevin Borich

ST. GEORGE LEAGUES
March
31 Renee Geyer
April
1 Renee Geyer

TAMWORTH WORKERS
March
28 Stars
April
4 Mother Goose

WESTERN SUBURBS LEAGUES CLUB, Ashfield
March
28&29 Richard Clapton

FORSTER CONCERT, Forster
March
26 Rose Tatto, Ray Burton & The Night Flyers, Cold Chisel, Kevin Borich Express, Agraphobia

NEWCASTLE SHOWGROUND
April
2 (afternoon) Stars

MUSICIANS CLUB
March
24,25,26 Leon Berger, Barry Leef Band
28,29 Fay Lewis Band

SOUTH SYDNEY LEAGUES CLUB
March
25 Magic

BRISBANE

PRINCE ALFRED HOTEL –Booval
March
27-2 Mixtures
April
3-9 Gemini

HOMESTEAD HOTEL–Zillmere
March
27-2 Magnum
April
3-9 Geeza

MAMIES–Fortitude Valley
March
27-2 Stax
3-9 Mixtures

NATIONAL HOTEL–City
March
27-28 Heart and Soul
29 Mother Goose
30-2 Heart and Soul
April
3-9 Heart and Soul

JET CLUB–Coolangatta
March
27-30 Caspter, Stretch and the Elastic Band
31 Mother Goose
April
1-9 Caspter, Stretch and the Elastic Band

GROSVENOR HOTEL– Rockhampton
29-9 Bronze Lake

MANDARIN CLUB– Townsville
27-9 Felix

CAESARS PALACE–Cairns
27-9 Oasis

AIRLIE BEACH HOTEL– Airlie Beach
27-9 Brooklyn

GREAT KEPPEL ISLAND
27-9 All Weather Band

EASTS LEAGUES CLUB– Cooparoo
April
2 Mother Goose
9 Mixtures

4ZZZ JOINT EFFORT- Uni. St. Lucia
March
31 Survivors, Wasted Daze

DARLING DOWNS INSTITUTE –Toowoomba
March
30 Mother Goose

CLEVELAND SANDS HOTEL– Cleveland
April
1 Mother Goose

PATCH–Greenmount
March
29 Rockwell T James
31-1 Rockwell T James

ADELAIDE

LORD MELBOURNE HOTEL, Melbourne St.
March
30 Somoe, Sue Barker and the Onions
31 Rum Jungle
April
1 Clean Cut
6 Somoe, Sue Barker and the Onions
7 Rum Jungle
8 Clean Cut
14 Rum Jungle
15 Clean Cut

ARKABAR HOTEL, Glen Osmond Road.
March
29,30,31 The Manning Band
April
1,2 The Manning Band
4,5,7,8,9 Texas
11-16 Desert Rat

OLD LION HOTEL DISCO, Melbourne St.
March
29,30,31, Peter Dean and the Dean Brothers Band
April
1 Peter Dean and the Dean Brothers Band
5-8 Magnacarta
12-15 Magnacarta

CREMORNE HOTEL
March
31 Soapbox Orchestra
April
7,14 Soapbox Orchestra

BLAZES 2, OLD MARINER HOTEL
March
29-31 Total Disco Till Dawn

TIVOLI HOTEL, Pirie Street
March
29 Chris Finnen
30 Mickey Finn
31 Country and Western
April
4 Lone Star Show
5 Chris Finnen
6 Mickey Finn
7 Country and Western
11 Lone Star Show
13 Mickey Finn
14 Country and Western

MARRYATVILLE HOTEL, Kensington Road
March
24,25,31 Lone Star Show
April
1 Lone Star Show

PERTH

STEVE'S HOTEL, 171 Broadway, Nedlands.
April
1 Dave Hole
2 Free Emission
7 Healing Force
8 Dave Hole
9 Free Emission

RAFFERTIES HOTEL
April
1,3 Hamlet Huff
5,7 Rock Revival
8,10 Hamlet Huff

CITY HOTEL, King St.,
April
1 Free Emission
3 Bag-A-Bones
5 Free Emission
7 Everest

MOSMAN PARK, HOTEL 54 Glyde St.
April
1 Rock Revival
2 Healing Force
8 Free Emission
9 Bag-A-Bones

KEWDALE HOTEL, 137 Kewdale Rd.
April
1 Everest
2,9 Stallion

WHITE SANDS HOTEL, 23 Hastings St., Scarborough
April
1 Free Emission
2 Everest
4,9 Dave Hole

TOURS

BOB DYLAN
April
1 Sydney Showground

BILLY JOEL
April
1 Perth Entertainment Centre
4 Adelaide Festival Theatre
9 Melbourne Festival Hall
11 Sydney Hordern Pavilion
13 Brisbane Festival Hall

FOREIGNER
April
11 Brisbane Festival Hall
13 Sydney Hordern Pavilion
14 Melbourne Festival Hall
16 Adelaide Festival Theatre

DALY WILSON BIG BAND
April
2 Sydney Opera House
3 Pacific Hotel, Surfers Paradise
4 Brisbane Cloudland
5 Darwin Ampitheatre
6 Alice Springs Memorial Club
7 Adelaide Festival Theatre
10 Melbourne Dallas Brooks Hall
12 Canberra School of Music

SKYHOOKS
March
25 Manhattan Hotel, Melbourne
26 Lorne Pacific Hotel
30 Waltzing Matilda Hotel, Melbourne
31 St. Kilda Town Hall
April
1 Bombay Rock, Melbourne
5 Whitehorse Hotel, Melbourne
6 Sundowner Hotel, Geelong

THE DUDLEY MOORE TRIO
April
8 Perth Concert Hall
11 Festival Theatre, Adelaide
17,18 Dallas Brooks Hall, Melbourne
19 Canberra Theatre Centre
24 His Majestys, Auckland
27 Grand Opera House, Wellington
29 Christchurch
May
2,3,4, Sydney Town Hall

TMG
April
26 Burnie Town Hall
27 Devonport Recreation Centre
28 Launceston Albert Hall
29 Hobart City Hall

FIFTH DIMENSION
March
27,28 Granada Hotel, Hobart
29,30 Hotel Australia, Adelaide
31 Sheraton Hotel, Perth
April
1 Sheraton Hotel, Perth

STARS
March
28 Tamworth
29 Pleasures Wine Bar, Kogarah
31 Caringbah Hotel
April
1 Northern Suburbs Leagues Club, Wollongong
2 Penrith Rugby Leagues Club
3 Newcastle Workers Club

DRAGON
March
27 Geelong Showground
29 Ballarat Civic Hall
31 Sale Memorial Hall
April
1 Morwell Technical Hall
2 Melbourne Dallas Brooks Hall
4 Bendigo Cinema
5 Gouldburn Valley Hotel, Shapparton
6 Wollongong Town Hall
7 Newcastle Civic Theatre
9 Sydney Regent Theatre
11 Armidale Uni Hall
12 Coffs Harbour Civic Centre
13 Lismore Town Hall
14,15 Gold Coast Playroom
16 Her Majestys Theatre, Brisbane

KEVIN BORICH EXPRESS
March
24 Bondi Lifesaver
25 Caringbah Hotel
26 Taree
27 Sydney Showground
29 War & Peace, Parramatta
31 Stage Door Tavern, Sydney
April
1 Manly Vale Hotel
3 Newcastle Workers Club
4 Castle Hill RSL

RICHARD CLAPTON BAND
March
25 Manly Vale Hotel
26 Penrith Rugby Leagues Club
27 Sydney Showground
28 Western Suburbs Leagues Club, Ashfield
29 Western Suburbs Leagues Club, Newcastle
30 Revesby Workers Club
April
1 Liverpool Disco
2 Newcastle

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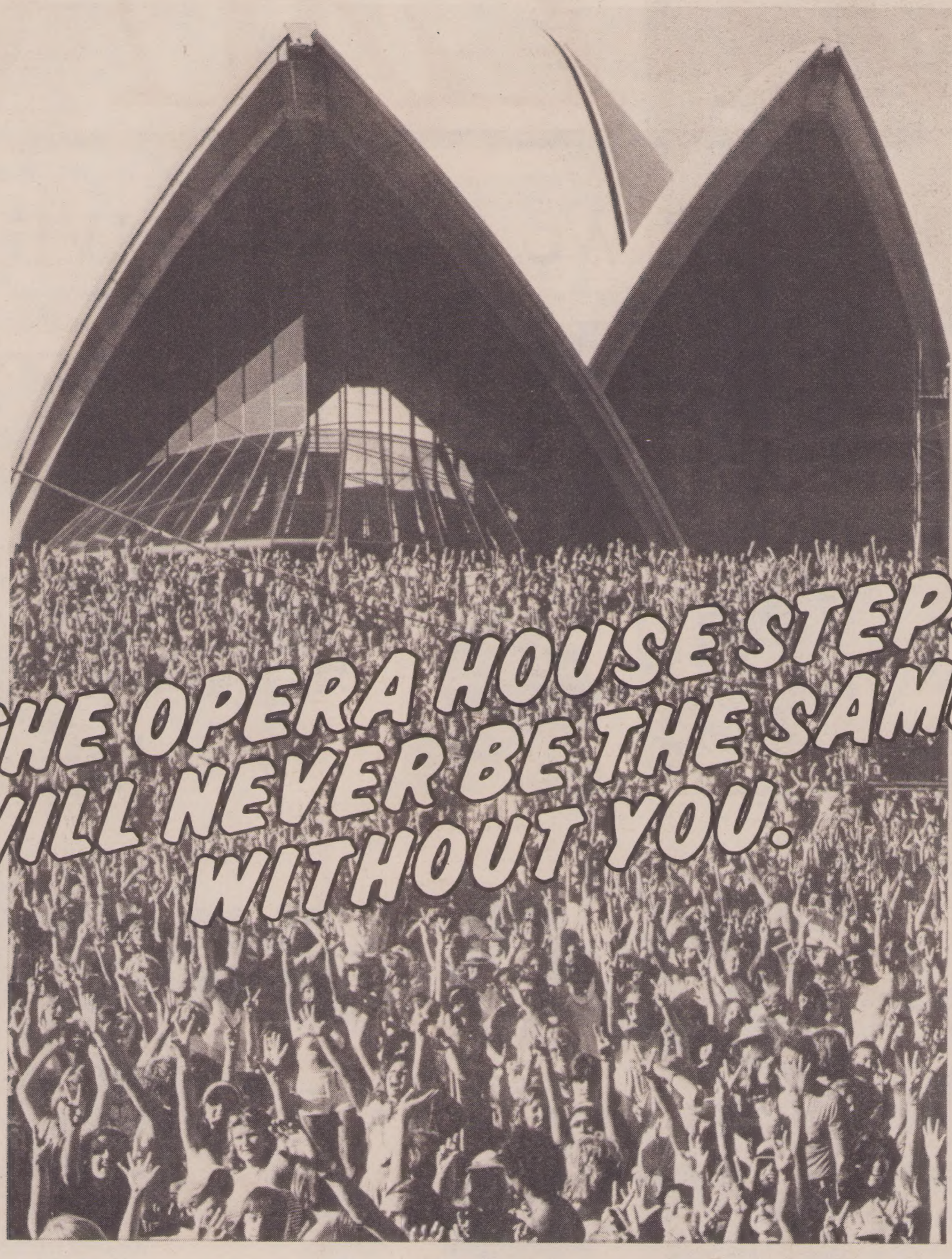

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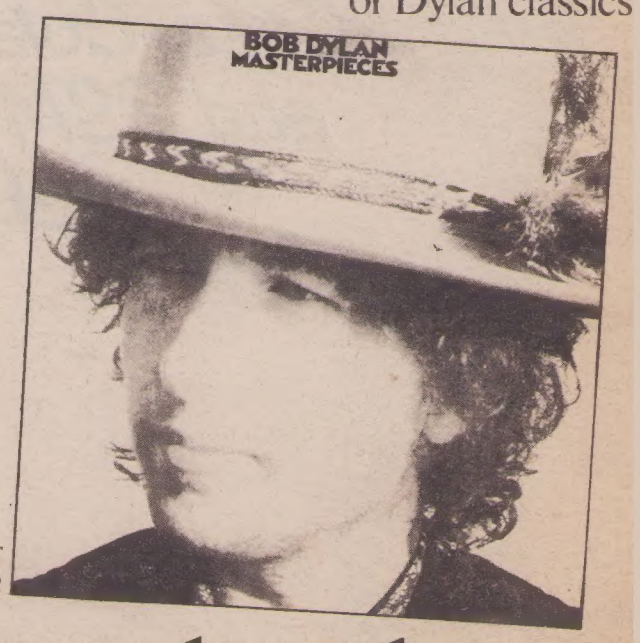

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